

# **Wahuni**

**(The Undesirables)**

**African urbanisation, crime and colonial order in Dar es Salaam, 1919-1961**

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This thesis is submitted in part fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Ph.D. at the School of  
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‘[I]n Africa nothing is quite as it should be to the European mind. The European mind requires logic and order and civilisation, and so it tries to bring these to Africa. Historically this is desirable, but for the individual European often exhausting, like trying to prod a dinosaur along a narrow path with a small stick.’

J.C. Cairns (former DO, Dsm), *Bush and Boma*, London: 1959, p.117.

‘Straightness is one of the things the Europeans have brought here. We Africans must learn it, like arithmetic.’

Abdullah (Cairns’ servant), *Ibid.*, p.20.

## **Abstract**

The thesis examines African urbanisation in Dar es Salaam in the British colonial period and the official response to this phenomenon. It is divided into three parts.

In Part One colonial urban policy is discussed. British officials initially showed a marked antipathy towards African urbanisation. The true home of the African was considered to be in the rural areas where his tribal society not only catered for his social and economic needs but also provided a medium through which he could conveniently be administered. Beginning in the 1940s there was a revision of colonial policy. The inevitable growth of permanent African urban communities was acknowledged. An attempt was made to nurture a 'respectable' class of urban African. At the same time, however, antipathy towards urbanisation persisted. Officials continued to display concern about the deleterious effects of the urban environment on the 'upcountry native', and in particular the growing problem of unemployment.

Part Two is concerned with crime in Dar es Salaam. The most immediate aspect which informed official antipathy to African urbanisation was its role in the spread of criminality. Anxiety over the presence of growing numbers of Africans in the capital, many of whom had no regular formal employment, was closely associated with the problem of urban lawlessness, which grew ever more serious as the years passed. This lawlessness was in part a product of strict colonial legislation which criminalised both customary and informal economic activities.

In the final part of the thesis, attempts to control urban growth are examined. Throughout the colonial period Tanganyikan officials argued for the introduction of a pass system to stem the rural-urban flow. Political considerations ruled it out, however. Faced with a burgeoning urban population and limited resources with which to administer it, colonial officials increasingly resorted to the expulsion of Africans from the town back to their rural 'homes'.



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## Introduction

The process of urbanisation has perhaps been the single most noteworthy trend of twentieth century world history.<sup>1</sup> In 1900 only one country, Britain, could be described as 'urbanised'. By the end of the century those countries which had larger rural than urban populations had become the exception instead of the rule, and a majority of the human race was residing in towns.<sup>2</sup> Nowhere has this urban revolution been more profound than in the third world. Here societies which were overwhelmingly rural in character at the beginning of the century (or later – just 18 per cent of Africans lived in towns in 1960<sup>3</sup>) had by its' end become predominantly urban (in residential terms at least). Towns and cities in Africa, Asia and Latin America have grown at rates which far exceeded those experienced by the industrialised world. In the 1940s and 1950s the urban population in these three regions was growing at rates approaching 5 per cent. By contrast, in European countries at the point of their fastest urban population growth (mostly in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century) the average gain per year was around 2 per cent.<sup>4</sup> The rapid growth of third world cities has meant that their economic development has frequently failed to keep pace with their demographic expansion, resulting in widespread unemployment and inadequate infrastructure and services. Large populations of urban poor have emerged living and working on the margins of the modern city and the urban economy.

Whilst urban geographers and town planners may have viewed the emergence of these communities as a problem to be solved, municipal authorities and national governments in the developing world have all too often viewed them simply as a problem to be eradicated. Anxious to promote controlled urban development, third world politicians

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<sup>1</sup> A technical definition of urbanisation is the proportion of people living in urban settlements (usually of 100,000 or more). Thus an urbanised society is one in which more than half the population lives in a town. It has other, less precise meanings, however, which include the cultural processes associated with the shift from a rural to an urban society.

<sup>2</sup> UN, *Global Report on Human Settlements*, (Oxford, 1987), p.23.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p.52.

<sup>4</sup> Kingsley Davis, in "The Urbanization of the Human Population", *Scientific American*, 1965, (reprinted in LeGates, R.T. and Stout, F. (eds.), *The City Reader* (London, 1996)), p.8, quotes urban growth rates in the 1940s and 1950s of 4.7 per cent for a sample of seven African countries, 4.7 per cent for 15 Asian

have been dismissive of the initiatives of the urban poor to provide themselves with an income and a home. Difficult to supervise, the shanty communities are perceived by ruling classes as contaminating the urban environment, or as threats to the urban order. Frequently the politicians response to their presence has been to remove them from the cities and/or to prevent rural-urban migration in the first place. Such policies rarely (if ever) achieved the desired effect, but this has not prevented politicians throughout the developing world repeatedly adopting the same tactics. Examples are numerous. Armstrong, for example, mentions (amongst others) campaigns in the Philippines in 1963; in Indonesia in 1976; in Kampuchea in the late 1970s; and in Nigeria in 1984.<sup>5</sup> Hardoy and Satterthwaite cite instances in Dakar in 1977 and in Indonesia and the Philippines once again in 1970 and 1982 respectively.<sup>6</sup> Despite their manifest historical inadequacies contemporary politicians continue to favour such policies as a response to rapid urban growth. In 1998 a law was passed by the Cuban government giving Havana officials the power to forcibly repatriate migrants to their homes in the provinces.<sup>7</sup> Meanwhile, in the world's most populous country influx control is currently occurring on a monumental scale. A recent *Economist* reports that authorities in Beijing expelled 300,000 migrants from the city 'to ensure a spick-and-span capital' for the Communist Party's 50<sup>th</sup>-anniversary celebrations in October 1999.<sup>8</sup> Nor was this a one off. A New York human rights organisation estimates that several million Chinese are locked up each year as a result of the government's 'custody and repatriation' policies.<sup>9</sup> If urbanisation has been one of the twentieth century's most noteworthy historical trends, then perhaps the most frequent response to rapid urban growth has been for governments to attempt to limit it through the employment of highly coercive measures.

Like the populations' of other third world cities Dar es Salaam's inhabitants have, over the past fifty years, experienced government campaigns aimed at controlling urban growth and residence. As recently as 1997, in an attempt to clear the city of mendicants,

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countries, and 4.3 per cent for 12 Latin American countries. Peak growth rates in nine European countries was just 2.1 per cent.

<sup>5</sup> Allen Armstrong, "Urban control campaigns in the Third World: The case of Tanzania", Geography Dept., University of Glasgow, Occ. Papers no.19 (1987), p.5.

<sup>6</sup> Jorge Hardoy & David Satterthwaite, *Squatter Citizen: Life in the Urban Third World* (London, 1989), p.51.

<sup>7</sup> *The Economist*, 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1999, p.94.

<sup>8</sup> *The Economist*, 16<sup>th</sup> October 1999, pp.99-102.

one of Dar es Salaam's District Commissioners was lobbying for a law to prohibit alms-giving. In the Commissioners' own words this would serve 'to make the city attractive and free from filth.'<sup>10</sup> Perhaps the most notorious drive aimed at 'cleansing' the Tanzanian capital, though, occurred in 1983. The Human Resources Deployment Act (popularly known as *Nguvu Kazi*), passed by the Tanzanian government that year, criminalised the urban presence of those without formal employment. In turn Coast Regional Commissioner Mhaviile declared that petty business and street vending in general would not be regarded as gainful employment. Vegetable and ground nut vending, shoe shining, selling of fried fish, unauthorised kiosks and car washing were specifically targeted.<sup>11</sup> As a result of 'indiscriminate swoops' on people 'loitering' on the streets between 10am and 2pm, 15,000 were arrested in the last three months of 1983.<sup>12</sup> Those without employment were repatriated to their home regions or sent to work on sisal estates.<sup>13</sup> Many of the small traders who used to add life to the streets of Dar have gone', mourned the *Africa Contemporary Record* the following year: 'The nut, fruit and kebab sellers, watch repairers, cobblers, knife sharpeners, the barbers with their mirrors hung on trees, shoe-shiners, the women who cooked food for workers and, of course, the prostitutes were mostly scared off, or rounded up.'<sup>14</sup>

*Nguvu Kazi* was only the most notorious of the Tanzanian campaigns aimed at arresting urban growth. In the previous two decades measures to control urban un- and 'under-' employment had been adopted repeatedly by over-zealous politicians. Seven years before *Nguvu Kazi*, in 1976, there had been Operation *Kila Mtu Afanya Kazi* ('Everyone must work').<sup>15</sup> In 1972 Operation *Kupe*<sup>16</sup>, according to the Daily News, 'aimed at sending to the rural areas all jobless youths who roamed about in the city of Dar

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<sup>9</sup> '[M]igrants picked up by the authorities for 'custody and repatriation'', observes the *Economist*, 'represent a bigger affront to the concept of human rights than do the persecuted dissidents so publicised in the West.'

<sup>10</sup> Quoted in personal correspondence from *The Express* (an edition from August or July, 1997).

<sup>11</sup> *DN*, 5<sup>th</sup> October 1983.

<sup>12</sup> Colin Legum (Ed.), *Africa Contemporary Record, 1983-84*, (New York, 1985), p.B276.

<sup>13</sup> See for eg., *DN*, 11<sup>th</sup> November 1983.

<sup>14</sup> Legum, *Record*, p.B276. The popular anger and indignation provoked by *Nguvu Kazi* at least had the happy consequence of the liberalisation of controls over informal economic activities in 1987, many of which became lawful for the first time. See J.M.L. Kironde, "Approaches to dealing with urban poverty in Tanzania: The role of Urban Authorities", paper given at a Regional Workshop on Urban Poverty in Southern and Eastern Africa, March 1995, Nairobi.

<sup>15</sup> Known in Dar es Salaam as Operation Rwegasira after the then Regional Commissioner. Kironde, "Approaches".

<sup>16</sup> *Kupe* is Swahili for a tick or parasite.

es Salaam and other towns in the region.<sup>17</sup> Five years earlier, Regional Commissioner Songambele had implemented a campaign against those without formal employment setting a deadline in early 1967 'to have the city rid of unemployed' by March 31st that year. A similar effort two years before had been successful, but only for a limited period. 'Now', complained a journalist for the *Weekly News*,

the idlers are back with a vengeance. Palsied beggars are again to be seen, hands outstretched on the street corners and the queues at the Labour Exchange are as long as they ever were.<sup>18</sup>

It was ever thus. A decade on, President Nyerere commented on the intermittent attempts made to cleanse the town in the intervening period:

there is a great 'drive' to round up the unemployed in towns and repatriate them. For a week or so the criminals and idle parasites hide in their houses while responsible workers and peasants on legitimate business are harassed... Then the whole campaign dies away until it is realised that the problem of criminals in towns and of people not doing a hard day's work is still with us and the process repeated.<sup>19</sup>

In the course of these urban control campaigns the unemployed (a category which usually included those engaged in informal sector activities) were demonised by official propaganda. They were *kupe* (parasites); *wazurulaji* (loiterers); *wavivu* (idlers); *walevi* (drunkards); *wanyonyaji* (exploiters); as well as being *maadui wa siasa ya ujamaa na kujitegemea* ('enemies of the policy of socialism and self-reliance').<sup>20</sup> The politics of post-independence Tanzania resulted in the adoption of a distinctive slant to justify the state's attempts at urban 'cleansing'. It was those accused of being 'unproductive' who were perennially the targets of such campaigns. However, the origins of these campaigns are to be found in an earlier period. It was in the colonial era that both the phenomenon of rapid urbanisation emerged, and coercive measures aimed at controlling the urban population were first employed. The marginalisation of that section of the urban population existing outside the formal economy also occurred at this time. It is the period of British colonial rule which provided the formative influence on post-colonial attitudes towards the urban poor. It is this period which is the focus of my thesis.

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<sup>17</sup> *DN*, 10<sup>th</sup> January 1973, p.1.

<sup>18</sup> *WN*, 31<sup>st</sup> March 1967, p.14.

<sup>19</sup> Julius Nyerere, *The Arusha Declaration: Ten Years After* (Dsm, 1977), pp.46/7. The fault with the 'drives', according to Nyerere, lay in their temporary nature, not in the decision to target the unemployed.

<sup>20</sup> Joe Lugalla, *Crisis, urbanization, and urban poverty in Tanzania* (Lanham, 1995), p.164.



## Undesirables in colonial Dar es Salaam

Whilst post-independence politicians employed a wide range of Swahili terms in their propaganda against the 'unproductive' urban poor, the principal source of colonial officials' anxieties could be reduced to just one category in Swahili: the *wahuni*. The category of *wahuni* had by the 1950s, if not before, come to refer to all the un-, under-, and nefariously-employed Africans who, from the colonial point of view, cluttered the streets of Dar es Salaam. More specifically they were the target of repatriation campaigns conducted under the Removal of Undesirable Natives (later 'Undesirable Persons') ordinance. *Wahuni* derives from the Swahili verb *huni*, which, according to Johnson's *Standard Swahili-English Dictionary* (an excellent source for colonial Swahili usage), means to wander about for no good purpose, disobey or to be a vagabond. This made the *wahuni* 'profligates', 'wastrels', 'gadabouts', 'lawless persons' or 'outcasts'. Its' closest modern English equivalent, though, is 'hooligans'. It is unclear when the term first came to be applied to sections of the urban population in Dar es Salaam, although the adoption by a dance group of the title *Ngoma ya Kihuni* ('the hooligan's dance society')<sup>21</sup> in Sadaani in 1911 indicates its early usage along the *Mrima* (the Tanganyikan coast). This society was formed, Prof. Iliffe tells us, by 'low class, up-country immigrants to coastal towns.'<sup>22</sup> The adoption of the *kihuni* title by the dance group may well have been a defiant response to prevalent negative stereotypes.<sup>23</sup> Certainly by the 1930s '*wahuni*' seems to have passed into common usage as a pejorative term in Dar es Salaam. According to a 1939 editorial in *Kwetu* 'the well-known *Wahuni*' were to be encountered 'loafing in the bazaars and hotels, walking out late at night, and sleeping in obscure nooks.'<sup>24</sup> Sometime thereafter the term was adopted with increasing frequency by colonial officials to describe the growing number of young male Africans in the town without formal employment. It was a conveniently inclusive term<sup>25</sup> which encapsulated

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<sup>21</sup> The *ki-* prefix in Swahili is a diminutive.

<sup>22</sup> John Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika* (Cambridge, 1979), p.238.

<sup>23</sup> By 1935 a Dar es Salaam successor to the *Ngoma ya Kihuni* had come to the attention of the *Tanganyika Standard* in the form of 'The Loafer Band'. *TS*, 16<sup>th</sup> March 1935.

<sup>24</sup> *Kwetu*, 21st February 1939. Quoted in David Henry Anthony, "Culture and society in a town in transition: a people's history of Dar es Salaam, 1865-1939", unpub. Ph.D. thesis (University of Wisconsin, 1983), p.159/60. See also the letter on *wahuni* from M.F.Kassam in *Kwetu*, 13<sup>th</sup> January 1942.

<sup>25</sup> C.C. Harris, who more than any other official was responsible for intensified action against this section of the population, translated *wahuni*, in his autobiographical account of his colonial service, *Donkey's Gratitude* (Edinburgh, 1992), variously as 'bachelors' (p.297), 'young town stiffs' (p.304), 'wandering vagabonds' (p.341) and 'layabouts' (p.351).

(and at the same time marginalised) a troublesome section of the urban population, about whose movements and actions colonial officials had little knowledge.

In fact, official knowledge of the whole African community in Dar es Salaam remained limited at best throughout the colonial period. As the principle economic and administrative centre in Tanganyika Territory, the town always attracted a great diversity of people, of both indigenous and alien origin. So the District Commissioner, Orde-Browne, could complain as early as 1924 that the 'cosmopolitanism' of the town population

presents a real problem from an administrative point of view; an astonishing number of nationalities may be involved in any question which arises. Township Regulations have to be framed so as to suit the needs and idiosyncrasies of British, Belgian, Portuguese and Greek communities, living among the numerous Asiatic population which is divided rather by religion than nationality, while the whole is imposed upon the original inhabitants who vary from aristocratic and cultured Arabs, to primitive ex-slaves from the Congo.<sup>26</sup>

Interestingly, although Orde-Browne is complaining of the problems of administering such a mixed population, he has neglected to mention that section of the urban populace which caused District Commissioners the greatest concern; the large numbers of 'upcountry' African immigrants present in the town (other than the 'original' freed slaves). Dar es Salaam's population contained autochthonous Africans. These included local Zaramo and Swahili whose communities were subsumed by the growth of the town. In addition, there were Manyema freed slaves and Sudanese ex-askaris who had settled in the town in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, by the 1920s these established urbanites were outnumbered by Africans who had come to Dar es Salaam from their rural homes.<sup>27</sup> Not only was this section of the population larger than any other, it was also in itself particularly variegated, incorporating people from diverse ethnic and educational backgrounds, of varying ages and either sex, whose motives for being present in the Tanganyikan capital were, significantly, more poorly apprehended by colonial officials than those of other communities entering or residing in the town. It included those from neighbouring territories as well as from neighbouring districts, runaway youths alongside unattached women, itinerant traders alongside petty criminals. Educated Africans came to

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<sup>26</sup> DAR for 1924, p.4, TNA/53.4. It is revealing that Orde-Browne describes municipal legislation designed for the British, Belgian, Portuguese and Greek communities as being '*imposed upon* the original inhabitants'.

secure employment as junior government officials or as clerical staff in the various trading companies. Migrant labourers from all over the Territory worked on the docks -or on the sisal plantations on the outskirts of town- on fixed-term contracts; at the end of which they may decide to return to their rural home or to take a chance by remaining in the town. There was a constant flow of other migrant workers stopping off on their way to -or returning from- employment on the plantations in Eastern or Tanga Provinces or picking cloves in Zanzibar. Large numbers of men from outlying districts in Eastern Province came to the town as casual labourers working intermittently on the docks or for businesses in the commercial area, whilst in the meantime sometimes cultivating a small suburban plot or engaging in petty trade. 'Target' workers came to the capital from near and far -and for varying periods- to earn fixed amounts of money in order to meet tax requirements perhaps, or to pay bridewealth, before returning home. There was a constant flow into the town of jobless migrants seeking employment, not all of whom were successful. Many engaged in waged work only intermittently and lack of formal employment became a recurring problem from the early-1930s on. For many Africans who, for whatever reason, found themselves indigent, the capital was a place to seek alms; as it was too for the physically disabled who in many cases travelled to the town from the distant interior in order to gain access to the unprecedented surplus present in the town. In addition to those coming to earn money for taxes, Africans came to Dar es Salaam in order to avoid payment of them to their Native Authorities. The town was described in the district annual report for 1936 as 'a veritable haven for the tax defaulter.' Finally, the dense population of Dar es Salaam also attracted Africans who had adopted theft or deception as a means of getting by, although indications are that these kind of habits were more commonly learnt after arrival in the town. In either case petty thieves and con-men were a constant presence amongst the capital's African population. Alongside this immigrant community, Dar es Salaam's *permanent* African population was also a heterogeneous one, amongst whom diverse means of earning a living were adopted about which colonial officials often had but limited knowledge. As well as formal waged employment, on the docks or the railway for example, any number of more informal activities were engaged in: from the cultivation and sale of foodstuffs (raw as

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<sup>27</sup> The earliest breakdown of Dar es Salaam's population by area of origin I have -from the mid-1950s- gives the proportion of town residents originating in the town as just 11.5%, although what this tells us of the situation in the 1920s is of course unclear.

well as cooked) to the tapping and sale of *tembo*,<sup>28</sup> from the itinerant vending of tea and coffee to the harvesting of *beche de mer* -sea cucumbers- for export to the Orient.

Dar es Salaam's African community then, was a particularly heterogeneous one. It was also constantly shifting. Mobility was high. Contract labourers may lapse into unemployment, the indigent turn to crime, immigrants may acquire property in the town and become permanent residents. The community was also characterised by spatial mobility. Movement between the upcountry rural areas –near and far- and the capital was constant. There were great seasonal fluctuations of population. June to August –the start of the growing season in Eastern Province- in particular being a time when the rural-urban flow abated and to a certain extent was reversed. Meanwhile, times of economic slump not only forced jobless workers to return to their rural homes but also often resulted in a drift of the unemployed to the rural areas surrounding the town to engage in *shamba* cultivation.<sup>29</sup> In addition, within the town itself the African urban population was characterised by its mobility, with frequent shifts of address being common.<sup>30</sup>

Theoretically, colonial Dar es Salaam should have been an orderly, regimented town in which people's residential and occupational space was well defined and had been internalised by members of its diverse communities. Whilst technically there were no racial restrictions on place of residence, building regulations in the town's three zones were expected to result in effective segregation.<sup>31</sup> Bye-laws restricting Africans' freedom of movement within the town existed to reinforce residential segregation, and other regulations were in place designed to defend against unrestricted migration into the town. At no time, however, did the well-ordered capital envisaged in colonial legislation, in which inhabitants of the town knew their proper place, correspond to reality (although it remained an ideal informing decisions made by colonial and post-colonial administrators

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<sup>28</sup> Palm wine.

<sup>29</sup> J. A.K. Leslie, *A Survey of Dar es Salaam* (Oxford, 1963), p.93.

<sup>30</sup> For example Leslie estimated in 1957 'that a quarter of younger people move house every three to four months'. Leslie, *Survey*, p.250.

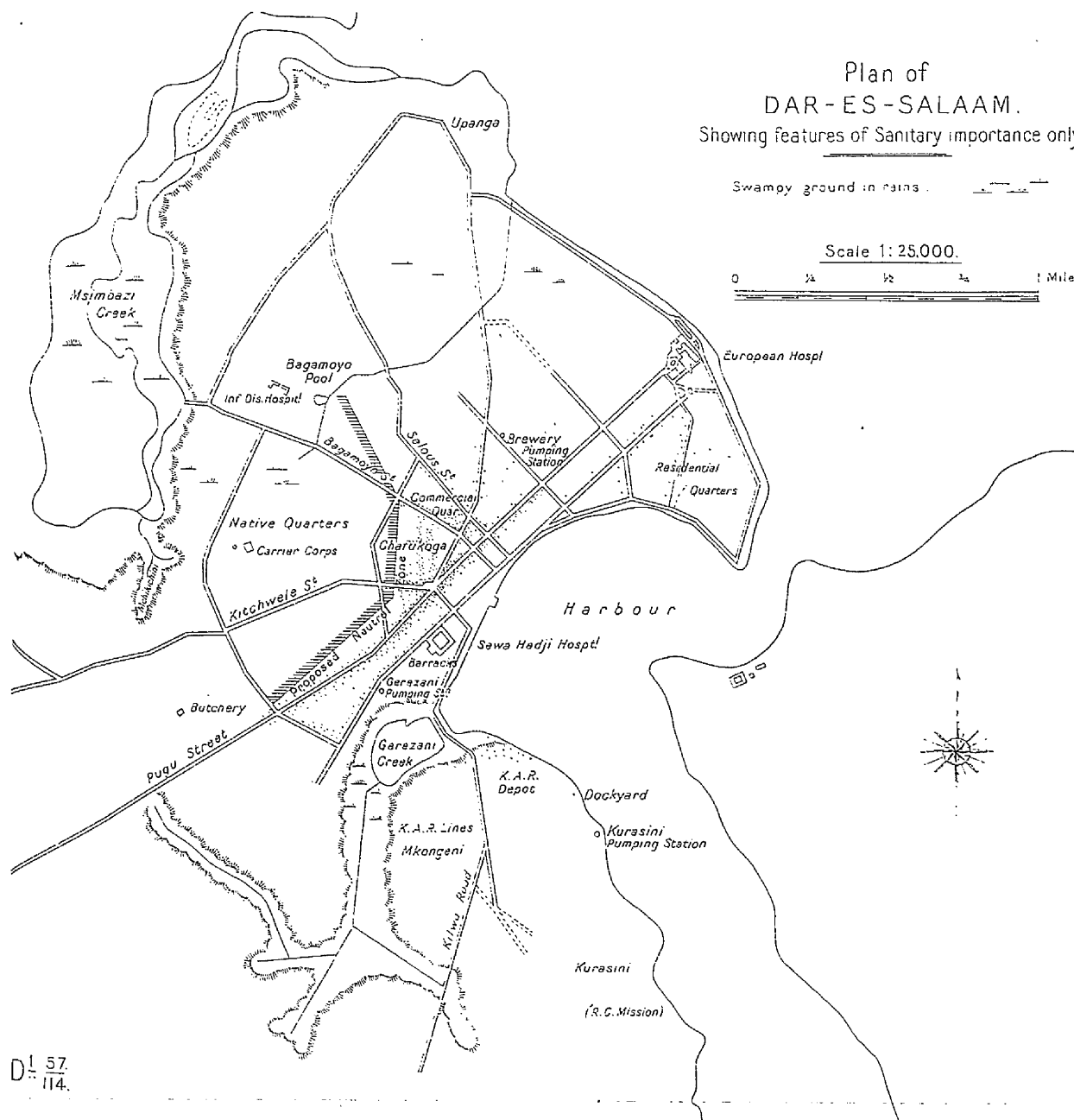
<sup>31</sup> The three zones, which were defined by these differing building regulations, were arranged as follows: Zone I, which stretched from present day Maktaba Street to the sea front (and was later extended northwards to include Oyster Bay and Kinondoni), was occupied predominantly by Europeans. Zone II, which included the main commercial centre and the docks, was occupied almost entirely by Indians. Zone III, which extended from the western side of Mnazi Mmoja and included all areas within the township boundary to the west and south of there, was principally an area of African residence.

Plan of  
DAR-ES-SALAAM.  
Showing features of Sanitary importance only

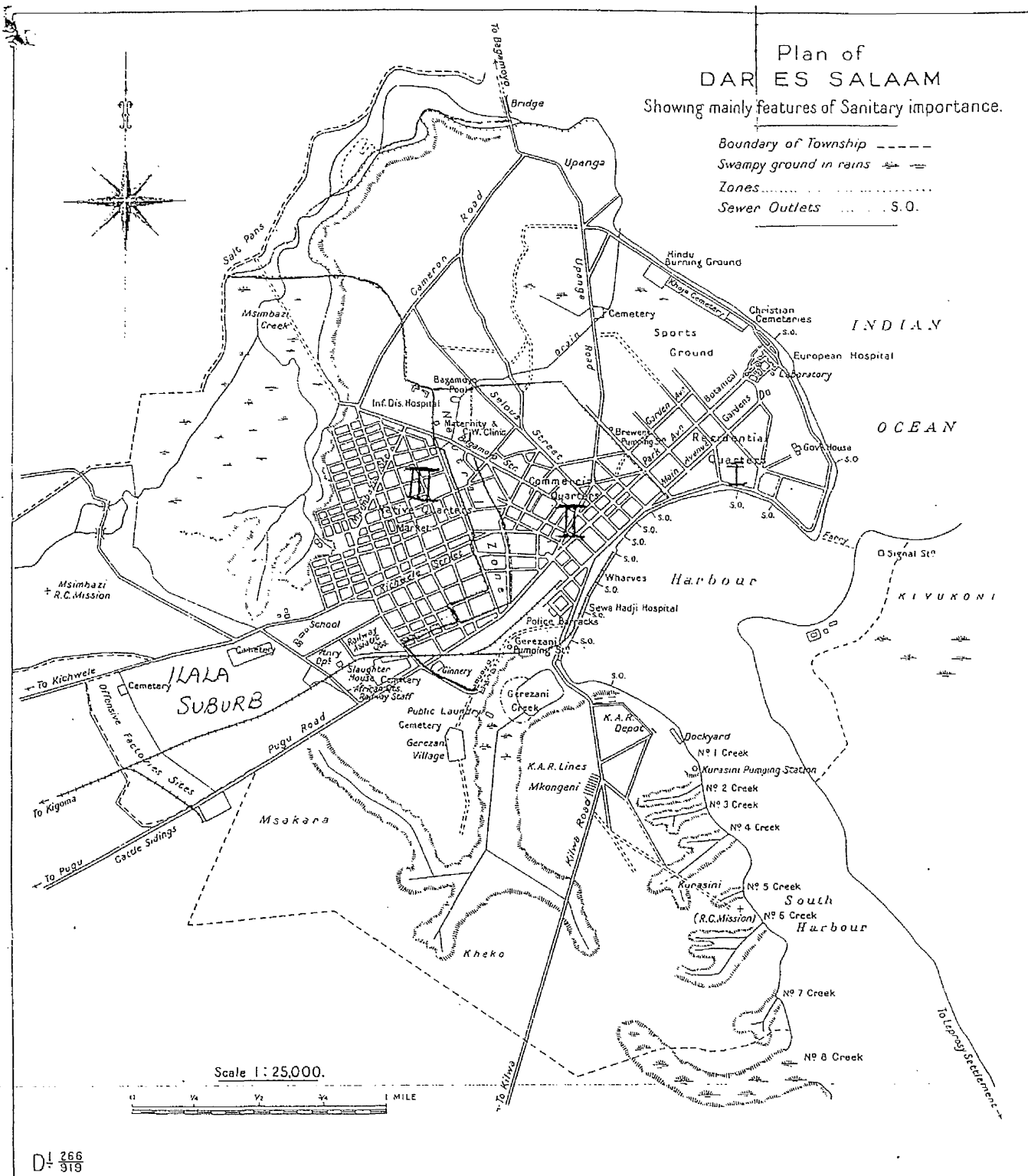
Swampy ground in rains . . . . .

Scale 1:25,000.

0 1/4 1/2 3/4 1 Mile



Map 2 Dar es Salaam, 1922 (showing 'Proposed Neutral Zone')  
Source: Medical AR for 1922



Traced by A. C. S. G. & H. M. from a plan supplied by the Health Officer. N° D: 82

WATER SUPPLY & SEWER LAYOUTS, D.D. 1925, BY A. C. S. G. & H. M.

Land, Survey & Mines Dept. T.T. 4.4.1925.

Map 3. Dar es Salaam, 1925 (after 'Zoning')  
Source: TNA 12589 Vol.1

alike). Building regulations failed to stop wealthy Indians<sup>32</sup> residing in the 'European' quarter; to prevent the existence of African owned shanties on the fringes of the so-called 'Indian bazaar'; or to restrict the presence of substantial numbers of Indian residents in the African township of Kariakoo. Of greater significance though, was the equal ineffectiveness of those regulations aimed at restricting rural-urban migration, alongside those aimed at controlling migrants once they'd arrived in the town. Throughout the British period, in the midst of Dar es Salaam's heterogeneous and ill-comprehended African community, the disturbing presence of a 'floating population' loomed large in the official imagination, representing a persistent threat to colonial urban order. Whilst legislation proscribed the urban residence of those with 'no visible means of subsistence', however, officials were hard pressed to enforce it against a population which was not only an impermanent and constantly shifting one but which was also, from the late-1930s, expanding at an alarmingly swift pace.

British officials had difficulty, in spite of the relatively small size of the town, in fathoming such a fluid population. In part this was a consequence of the distance between European officials responsible for administering Dar es Salaam and those African inhabitants whom they 'ruled'. This distance had both a physical and a cultural aspect. European representatives of the native administration were physically distant not only as result of their area of residence -in Zone I, located at a strategic remove from the congested streets of the African township- but also in the location of the district office, which, despite numerous moves between 1919 and 1958, was only situated in the African areas of Dar es Salaam just three years before independence. It is likely that this distance not only inhibited European awareness of everyday life in the African areas, but also that the minimal European presence allowed the inhabitants of those areas a leeway one may not expect to find amongst the 'native' community of a colonial town. Meanwhile, whilst individual officers displayed varying degrees of empathy with the needs and desires of the African population, the cultural distance between the district official and his subjects was, despite the presence of more familiar urban institutions and the nucleus of a western-educated class of Africans in the town, in most cases just as great as that between European officials and Africans in the rural areas. The African community of Dar es Salaam tended to be perceived as an aggregate mass by most officials about whom one

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<sup>32</sup> Throughout the thesis 'Indians' is used to refer to individuals originating from the Indian sub-continent,

complained in 1930, '[w]e know less... than we do of remote tribes'.<sup>33</sup> Twenty years later, the situation was much the same: sociologists working for the government in 1951 were told that '[p]eople make wild guesses about the native population but we don't know their habits.'<sup>34</sup> This lack of knowledge magnified anxieties about the African urban presence. Where to the European mind no apparent order was discernible, a portentous disorder was assumed. Confronted with a faceless and yet heterogeneous population, colonial officials tended to anticipate the worst and to demand ever increasing powers to assuage their exaggerated concerns. The demonisation of the *wahuni* formed a prime expression of these concerns.

### **The administration and policing of the town**

Throughout the British colonial period considerable difficulties were encountered in establishing viable administrative structures to supervise and control the African township. Establishing the authority of African intermediaries amongst the mixed communities of the township was problematic. Meanwhile, mobility amongst the African population, to, from, and within the town, undermined administrative attempts at supervision. The other principal difficulty was a lack of resources. The District Office was consistently short-staffed up to the closing years of colonial rule, and whilst officials may often have had ambitions to establish more effective urban governance, the limited resources available to them led to these ambitions being constantly thwarted. Despite these problems, a durable native administration was in place by the late-1930s which included a *Liwali* acting as its head and presiding over the principal African court in the town, and three *Wakili* (increased to four in 1953), who were responsible for the wards into which the town was divided, all of whom eventually were also presiding over their own (grade B) courts. Perhaps the most important function played by these African officials was that in administering the law in minor criminal matters -which formed the bulk of the cases in the town- they added some legitimacy to legislation which may not have existed had it been administered solely by a European judiciary. Their

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Muslim and non-Muslim alike.

<sup>33</sup> Quoted in the Report by R. and C. Sofer on a possible sociological survey of Dsm, p.14, TNA/18950 Vol. III.

<sup>34</sup> Notes leading up to recommendations that a sociological survey of Dsm should take place (by the Sofers?) in Dsm Ex-Prov. Dist. Book Vol.V.I.



administrative capacity to influence or control the African population of the various wards, on the other hand, was limited. It was the *Jumbes* or Town Headmen, who in terms of the everyday administration of the urban African population were the most important African agents of government within the town. The *Jumbes*, in the words of one Provincial Commissioner, combined 'the roles of local special constable and petit fonctionnaire.'<sup>35</sup> They had responsibility for a number of sub-divisions within the township, which might incorporate just one street in the more densely populated heart of Zone III or larger areas in the less urbanised outskirts such as Kinondoni or Msasani. At the end of the war, Dar es Salaam had 24 of these Town Headmen, rising to 28 in the early-1950s. By 1956 though, this number had, in spite of a substantial increase in the urban population, been reduced to just 14, at which point there were approximately 2,450 taxpayers to each Headman, although numbers varied greatly from ward to ward.<sup>36</sup> The Headmen acted as the "eyes and ears" of the District Commissioner',<sup>37</sup> passing on instructions and explanations of policy in one direction, and people's complaints and information about events and individuals in the African areas of the town in the other. They were, in addition, expected to ensure that the communities over which they presided remained orderly and well-behaved; liaising with the police over the prevention of crime and control of undesirables, and with the tax department over the collection of taxes. *Jumbes*, like the *Liwali* and *Wakili*, were directly appointed by the provincial administration. Whilst some attention may have been paid to local feeling –the Headmen would, for example, usually have been long-term residents of the area for which they were made responsible<sup>38</sup>– there was no established consultative process and the needs of Government in the selection process remained paramount. The reliability of different Headmen in the eyes of district officials, as well as their legitimacy as leaders amongst African communities within the town, no doubt varied greatly. For example, one of the *Jumbes*' prime responsibilities was to help organise tax raids in order to apprehend defaulters. It was just as likely though, that some at least were warning residents about the raids that they had helped organise.<sup>39</sup> In the main, according to Leslie, the *Jumbes*' 'loyalties lay with their people and not the Government.'<sup>40</sup> As such it is unlikely they

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<sup>35</sup> PC, EP to Sec. for African Affairs, 7<sup>th</sup> September 1949, TNA/540/27/28.

<sup>36</sup> DC, Dsm to DC, Mwanza (Urban), 24<sup>th</sup> February 1956, TNA/540/3/75/A.

<sup>37</sup> M.J.B. Molohan, *Detribalisation*, (Dsm, 1959), para. 65.

<sup>38</sup> Interview no.1.

<sup>39</sup> Interview no.11.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

provided the degree of control over their respective areas that provincial administration officials aspired to.

Along with the native administration and judiciary, the Tanganyika police force formed the third branch of the state at the heart of the imposition and maintenance of a colonial urban order in Dar es Salaam. Indeed, of all three, it was perhaps the most essential. Whilst the colonial regime, in its administrative and judicial initiatives in Dar es Salaam, was attempting to establish structures of governance which retained the broad acceptance of the African urban population, its' success in this endeavour was in the end greatly facilitated by the background presence of an organised police force. The legitimacy of such institutions was always to some degree reliant upon the coercive potential of the colonial state, which in Dar es Salaam the police represented. In the inter-war period the police presence throughout Dar es Salaam was negligible. An African constabulary which by 1938 numbered 247 was commanded by 10-15 European officers. A network of police patrols was established by the late-1920s. Whilst the European, and to a significantly lesser extent, the Indian, areas were covered, Zone III received very little attention. With an increase in the police establishment and the introduction of more sophisticated policing techniques this changed after WWII. However, the African areas continued to receive less attention in the form of crime prevention measures than the remainder of the town. In the 1950s the total strength of the Dar es Salaam force had risen to over 400 officers and men. They were engaged in a diverse range of activities which included motorised, bicycle, dog and beat patrols, undercover work, traffic duty, and 'wahuni raids' aimed at the apprehension and removal of urban 'undesirables'. Alongside the numerical expansion of the force, new police posts emerged throughout the town in the course of the 1950s. Whilst the extension in policing after WWII resulted in the apprehension of more and more criminals, growing powers of surveillance and detection only served to bring to light growing evidence of criminality. Meanwhile, the increasingly intrusive nature of urban policing resulted in the unpopularity of the force. From the mid-1950s police constables were commonly subject to assaults by criminals which often appeared to have widespread support amongst urban Africans.<sup>41</sup> By this time, if not before, the Dar es Salaam constabulary, ethnically distinct and residentially and socially separated from the wider African population, appear to have been perceived of as

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<sup>41</sup> See eg. *TS*, 26<sup>th</sup> September 1957.

something of an occupying force. For this reason, as well as for more straightforward ones related to the difficulties in policing a rapidly expanding population, the degree of influence exercised by the police on the African population was substantially less than that aspired to by both European officials and police officers. Resources for the policing of the town were in just as short a supply as those for its general administration and development. Whilst police activity in the town resulted in the arrest of many offenders responsible for a variety of criminal acts, major and minor, it is likely that many more offences against the penal code and the municipal bye-laws –the effectiveness of which often depended upon the active presence of agents of enforcement- went undetected as large parts of the African town remained more or less un-policed.

As the limited effectiveness of the orthodox institutions of colonial control was exposed thanks to the strain placed upon urban resources by the growing African population, it was found necessary to consider the more unorthodox –not to say coercive- measures of controlling internal migration and of the removal of those individuals whom the colonial state deemed had no place in the urban areas.

## **Methodology**

The shortcomings of Dar es Salaam's police force and native administration in part have their origin in official ignorance about the urban African population. The lacunae in colonial knowledge are only too apparent in the primary material that has survived, which invariably is much stronger on the perceived sources for official anxiety than it is on everyday life of the African community in Dar es Salaam. Even the best-informed, and most sympathetic observers had only a partial view of African life in the capital. They were especially ignorant of the movements and actions of that section of the population drifting between urban and rural life, and/or intermittently engaging in waged employment, otherwise resorting to petty trade, to scavenging or to crime to get by, who by the late colonial period formed a large proportion (probably a majority) of the urban African population. This lack of knowledge also expanded at a rate comparable to the growth of the town. So the social surveys produced by Baker and Leslie, in 1931 and 1957 respectively, can be viewed as yardsticks of colonial knowledge. Whilst Leslie may have spent twice as much time (or more) in researching and writing his report; whilst the

resulting survey is substantially longer, richer and more detailed; and whilst Leslie had access to information gathered by organisations which didn't exist in Baker's day, the two surveys provide pictures of Dar es Salaam in 1931 and 1957 of similar comprehensiveness and reliability at different stages of the town's development. By 1957 the African population of the town had increased fourfold, its' geographical extent by two or three times, and urban economic, social and cultural activities had proliferated at a comparable rate. All of these factors substantially complicated any attempt by even the most enthusiastic and sympathetic colonial officer<sup>42</sup> to get a grasp of the African town. Meanwhile, the administration of Dar es Salaam was mainly in the hands of officials, who either hadn't the time or the inclination (or both), to familiarise themselves fully with the lives of urban Africans (who would probably not have encouraged such intrusions anyway). The African township as viewed from the *Boma* (District Office) differed as much from that constructed from the innumerable interviews and other data collected by Leslie in the course of his survey as Leslie's picture differed from the African experience of Dar es Salaam.

The shortcomings of the official record provide obvious problems for the historian of the town. Any attempt to construct a portrait of the lives of the many thousands of Africans who came to the Tanganyikan capital and survived through intermittent formal employment or through the adoption of informal economic activities is rendered futile. Whilst a window can be opened up on the lives of the so-called *wahuni* using data gleaned from the various colonial reports and correspondence, that window is invariably located in the district *Boma*. Where informal economic activities, for example, do come to light, they are generally viewed simply as a problem to be controlled. We get little or (mostly) no idea of their location, their extent, who exactly is engaging in them, their profitability or any number of other aspects which may be of interest.<sup>43</sup> Meanwhile other surviving records of colonial Dar es Salaam also fail to illuminate those areas neglected in official sources. In European reminiscences, and in the settler, the Indian, and even the African press (which was of course the voice of a literate elite), the *wahuni* occupy a similar space to that which they occupy in government correspondence or reports. Here too they generally emerge as a faceless mass and a source for concern; indeed, as

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<sup>42</sup> Which, judging by his survey, Leslie undoubtedly was.

<sup>43</sup> The reports by Baker and Leslie are the exception, although even these present only a limited snapshot of such activities.

undesirables. In Dar es Salaam, as elsewhere, the poor leave behind only 'sporadic traces'.<sup>44</sup>

Despite these difficulties, however, broad patterns do begin to emerge from the historian's privileged overview of data surviving from the four decades of British colonial rule in Tanganyika. Whilst we may catch what are just glimpses of the activities of those Africans labelled *wahuni*, it is at least possible to gain some impression of what was going on in Dar es Salaam beyond the colonial ken. Also, whilst the official record may have significant weaknesses as far as the understanding of the African town is concerned, it is on the other hand extremely strong on how the colonial mind responded to the phenomenon of rapid urban growth. Parts one and three of the thesis take advantage of this rich material. In part one there is an analysis of official attitudes towards African urbanisation and of the evolution of a colonial urban policy. In part three it has proved possible to reconstruct in some detail the application of one part of that policy; the attempts to stem rural-urban migration and to control the urban African population. Sandwiched between these, in part two, is an account –salvaged mostly from colonial sources- of those urban phenomena, rendered criminal by colonial legislation, which were the occasion for such official disquiet, and which led to the emergence of *wahuni* as colonial bogeymen *par excellence*.

## Sources

The thesis is heavily dependent on three archives in particular. First (and foremost) the Tanzanian National Archive provided a wealth of previously neglected data on colonial Dar es Salaam. This included district and departmental reports, government correspondence, and conference minutes. They offer an invaluable perspective on the town as seen through the eyes of colonial administrators. At the British Public Records Office there is also valuable material originating from Tanganyika, including official reports and correspondence. In addition, Colonial Office records provide some idea of the view from Whitehall. The final substantial archive collection, is that held at Rhodes House, Oxford. Here, the memoirs and correspondence of former colonial officials

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<sup>44</sup> John Iliffe, *The African Poor* (Cambridge, 1987), p.2.

collected in the Colonial Records Project in particular provided data which was highly complementary to that to be found in Tanzania and at Kew. Archive material relating to colonial Dar es Salaam is also to be found in the East Africana section of Dar es Salaam University library, notably reports from the Provincial Commissioners' conferences and Municipal Council minutes and committee reports. The library also contains useful secondary literature unavailable elsewhere. After these archives, the colonial press proved the next most valuable source. For the historian of crime everyday information recorded by newspapers is invaluable. In the case of Dar es Salaam these include the *Dar es Salaam/Tanganyika Times*, *Tanganyika Opinion*, *Tanganyika Herald*, *Tanganyika Standard*, *Kwetu*, *Mambo Leo*, and the *Sunday News*. These newspapers were particularly useful in shedding light on the perspective of European and Indian settlers and traders, and that of the African educated elite. Interviews of, and correspondence with, former officials and inhabitants of the town served to confirm (and embellish) much of the information gleaned from surviving documentary sources. As did a number of published colonial memoirs, notably those of C.C. Harris and J. C. Cairns. Finally, mention must be made of the two important surveys of the town conducted by E.C. Baker and J.A.K. Leslie.<sup>45</sup> Leslie's survey in particular is an extraordinarily rich document.

As far as the secondary literature is concerned, for a town of its' size and importance, Dar es Salaam has been curiously neglected by historians. Other than David Henry Anthony's thesis on early Dar es Salaam,<sup>46</sup> there has been no extended piece of historical research with the town as its subject. Useful surveys of Dar es Salaam's history can be found in the special edition of *Tanzania Notes and Records* by John Sutton, and in John Iliffe's magisterial history of Tanganyika.<sup>47</sup> Other work by Iliffe is also useful, notably the chapters on the dockworkers and on labour and urbanisation.<sup>48</sup> Nicholas Westcott's thesis on the impact of WWII on Tanganyika provides excellent analysis of the situation in Dar es Salaam in the 1940s.<sup>49</sup> The chapter by Deborah Bryceson an overview of the

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<sup>45</sup> A copy of Baker's report can be found in the SOAS archive; Leslie's was published as *A Survey of Dar es Salaam*, (Oxford, 1963).

<sup>46</sup> Anthony, "Culture".

<sup>47</sup> J.E.G. Sutton, "Dar es Salaam: a sketch of a hundred years", in *TNR* No.71; Iliffe, *Modern History*, especially pp. 381-404.

<sup>48</sup> Iliffe, J. "A history of the Dockworkers of Dar es Salaam", in *TNR* No.71; and "Wage labour and urbanisation in *Tanzania under colonial rule*, Kaniki, M. (Ed.) (London, 1979).

<sup>49</sup> Nicholas Westcott, "The Impact of the Second World War on Tanganyika: 1939-49", unpub. Ph.D. thesis (Cambridge University, 1982).

politics and economics of food in the town.<sup>50</sup> Richard Stren reviews urban housing policy in the colonial and the post-colonial period.<sup>51</sup> Two recent works on Tanganyikan nationalism provide useful incidental material on conditions in Dar es Salaam. Susan Geiger's book sheds light on the position of urban women in the late colonial period.<sup>52</sup> Mohamed Said's book on Abdulwahid Sykes, in addition to unearthing a wealth of detail on a section of the African elite in the town, also offers numerous insights into other aspects of urban life.<sup>53</sup> Daisy Sykes Buruku's chapter on Abdulwahid's father, Kleist Sykes, and Westcott's article on Erica Fiah both complement Said's work.<sup>54</sup> From an anthropological perspective, Swantz, in his book on Zaramo *waganga*, offers valuable insights on urban life.<sup>55</sup> Two unpublished geographical works are also especially useful to the historian. Adolfo Mascarenhas gives a good overview of the development of Dar es Salaam. Meanwhile, Dr. Kironde's thesis on land use, much of which is written from an explicitly historical perspective, provides a very useful account of urban planning in the town.<sup>56</sup>

Of all the secondary literature, the only work to concentrate specifically on themes relating to this thesis are works by Allen Armstrong and Marjorie Mbilinyi. Armstrong's paper documents influx control measures and repatriation campaigns in Tanganyika/Tanzania. However, he focuses predominantly on the post-colonial period.<sup>57</sup> Mbilinyi's work, on the other hand, is of greater relevance to this research. In her article in the *Economic and Political Weekly* -and the revision of it in Parpart and Staudt- Mbilinyi observes the racial organisation of space in colonial Tanganyika and official concern over the process of African urbanisation.<sup>58</sup> She notes particular antipathy towards

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<sup>50</sup> Deborah Fahy Bryceson, "A century of food supply in Dar es Salaam", in *Feeding African Cities: Studies in Regional Social History*, ed. J.I. Guyer (Manchester, 1987).

<sup>51</sup> R. Stren, *Urban inequality and housing policy in Tanzania: The problem of squatting in Tanzania*. University of California, Berkeley, Institute of International Studies, Research Series No.24, 1975.

<sup>52</sup> Susan Geiger, *TANU Women: Gender and culture in the making of Tanganyikan nationalism, 1955-1965* (Portsmouth, NH, 1997).

<sup>53</sup> Mohamed Said, *The life and times of Abdulwahid Sykes (1924-1968): The untold story of the Muslim struggle against British colonialism in Tanganyika* (London, 1998).

<sup>54</sup> Daisy Sykes Buruku, "The townsman: Kleist Sykes", in *Modern Tanzanians*, Iliffe, J. (Ed.) (Dar es Salaam, 1973); Nicholas Westcott, "Erica Fiah: An East African Radical", *Journal of African History*, 1981.

<sup>55</sup> Lloyd Swantz, *The Medicine Man among the Zaramo of Dar es Salaam* (Uppsala, 1990).

<sup>56</sup> J.M.L. Kironde, "The evolution of land use structure in Dar es salaam 1890-1990: A study in the effects of land policy", unpub. Ph.D. thesis (University of Nairobi, Dept. of Land Devt., 1994).

<sup>57</sup> Armstrong, "Urban control campaigns".

<sup>58</sup> Marjorie Mbilinyi, "'City' and 'Countryside' in colonial Tanganyika", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol.XX (1985); and "This is an unforgettable business: Colonial state intervention in Tanzania", in J.L. Parpart & K.A. Staudt (eds.), *Women and the state in Africa* (Boulder, 1989), pp.111-129.

the presence of African women in the town, and documents colonial attempts to undermine the independence of female *pombe* (traditional beer) brewers in Dar es Salaam in the 1930s. Mbilinyi is right to observe this antipathy. However, urban women do not appear to have suffered the same attention from the district administration that men in the town experienced. It is not true to say that 'women were specifically targeted' for repatriation.<sup>59</sup> Indeed the almost complete absence of records of female repatriations is noteworthy, as is, more generally, the absence of any significant consideration -before the 1950s- of this not insubstantial section of the urban population in the official record. For colonial officials it was primarily African men who posed the threat of urban disorder. Mbilinyi goes on to analyse the supposed perpetrators of disorder as portrayed in the work of Leslie and Iliffe (1979). These authors are criticised for the way in which they marginalise rebellious youth. Mbilinyi sees in the anti-authoritarian behaviour of African youth evidence of the resentment felt towards colonial rule by the majority of the urban African population. There is something in this; the rapidly worsening police-public relations in the 1950s can be cited as evidence. However, delinquency cannot be attributed solely, or even principally, to anti-colonial feeling; poor urban adolescents in Tanganyika acted in much the same way as they do in other parts of the world. It is consequently spurious to see in their behaviour 'a new kind of order in the process of creation' or an emerging proletarian class-consciousness.<sup>60</sup>

## Chapter Outline

The three parts of the thesis are broken down into nine chapters. The purpose of the first chapter is to place what follows in a wider context. Whilst the secondary literature on Dar es Salaam is sparse, work on urbanisation elsewhere in Africa, and in western countries in particular, is more comprehensive. The chapter begins with a discussion of the similarities between colonial responses to urban growth in Dar es Salaam and responses to the early stages of mass urbanisation in the west. The second section describes urban policy in colonial Africa, with special reference to East and Central Africa.

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<sup>59</sup> Mbilinyi (1989), p.126. Mbilinyi also mistakenly dates the introduction of Cap.104 to the early-1930s.



In the second chapter the response to African urbanisation in Tanganyika is considered. Up to WWII official policy towards the urban African population had, like that in other colonies, been characterised by a high degree of ambivalence towards the growing numbers of Africans who were choosing to come to the towns to live and to work. Whilst the rural areas, where cohesive 'tribal' societies were presided over by Native Authorities, were perceived as a protective environment in which Africans could safely experience the transforming currents of colonial rule, the urban areas represented an anomic environment in which the culturally disoriented native was exposed and prone to corruption. However, colonial officials had presided over a society in which the lure of the towns –which according to a later report were 'essentially the result of non-African initiative'<sup>61</sup>- was proving more and more attractive to increasing numbers of Africans. This was a phenomenon that both inconvenienced and deeply concerned the colonial administration. In an attempt to assert some control over the process of African urbanisation colonial urban policy was transformed in the post-war period. From being places where the African presence was at best unwelcome, towns suddenly became an arena in which the 'new' African was to be moulded. By the late-1950s government was encouraging the stabilisation of an African petit-bourgeoisie in the towns, who had a vested interest in urban good governance. The broader process of urbanisation, however, continued to elicit official concern. Whilst a respectable, salaried and property-owning, class was emerging, it was dwarfed by the many unskilled Africans who –despite persistent official antipathy towards their presence- were making their way to the urban centres in ever greater numbers.

Chapter ~~three~~ provides a discussion of crime in the colonial context. The problem of defining crime is addressed first. It is observed that in a society governed by laws framed by an alien –though dominant- minority notions of illegality and illegitimacy often fail to coincide. The distinction is made –drawn from European criminal historiography- between 'real' and 'social' crime. In Dar es Salaam activities which were technically criminal were not necessarily viewed as such by many amongst the urban population. The different definitions of crime depended in part but not only on the racial background of the observer. Class was the other determinant. After a discussion of the reliability of

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid. pp.123/124.

<sup>61</sup> Draft copy of 'Urban problems in East and Central Africa – Report of a conference held at Ndola, N. Rhodesia, February 1958' [hereafter: 'Ndola Report'], p.4, TNA/UW80.131/Vol.1.

criminal statistics as a historical source, an impressionistic account is then given of the extent and pattern of crime in Dar es Salaam during the British colonial period. Judging by surviving records crime in the town between the wars was not serious. With the rapid increase in population from the late-1930s on, however, it appears to have become much more prevalent. This does not necessarily mean that the urban population was any more criminal. According to official statistics whilst there was a substantial rise in criminal cases, crimes *per capita* actually declined. To colonial officials, though, the rise in crime was a disquieting trend. The chapter ends with a review of the causes of crime as perceived (predominantly) by officials. Familiar factors tended to be singled out; the process of urbanisation, unemployment and want, but not, as in 19<sup>th</sup> century Britain, a psychological predilection for criminality on the part of the offender.

Chapter four provides a survey of 'real' crime in Dar es Salaam. Urbanisation in Tanganyika as elsewhere led to the emergence of a distinctive urban criminality. Property theft, in the form of burglary and theft from the person, became increasingly common. Distributors of stolen goods (wittingly or not) appear to have encouraged its incidence. Links are observed connecting receivers with the theft of scrap metal, of bicycles, and theft from the workplace. Stolen items were often transported from Dar es Salaam and disposed of further afield. Zanzibar was an obvious market. Smuggling from Zanzibar to Dar es Salaam (and elsewhere along the northern Mrima) was also common. In addition, there appears to have been a small number of professional criminals with links to Zanzibar and further north, who moved freely along the coast between Mombasa and Dar es Salaam. The emergence of an indigenous 'class' of professional criminals, including the activities of criminal gangs in the late-colonial period, is also observed. However, the conclusion is reached that the vast majority of crime in Dar es Salaam was opportunistic and petty in form.

The legitimacy of much colonial legislation was often considered highly questionable by Dar es Salaam's African population, and laws and bye-laws were as a result routinely breached. It is these 'social' crimes which form the subject of chapter five. The legislation controlling the manufacture and consumption of alcohol was particularly unpopular, proscribing as it did the customary usage of alcohol such as *tembo*. It also interfered with a profitable line of business for urban entrepreneurs. From early on then, liquor legislation was honoured in its breach. Petty trading was another form of social

crime which was common. Whilst a limited amount of licensed trade was allowed by municipal authorities, many Africans took the opportunities represented by the large urban population to engage in unlicensed activities. As rural-urban migration swelled and urban unemployment became a problem, increasing numbers turned to petty trade as a means of subsistence. By the mid-1950s it appears to have become widespread. Although it provided a living for a vulnerable section of the population, however, unlicensed trading was not tolerated by the municipal administration and periodic round-ups occurred. Discussion of the most common social crime, default of taxes, is left till last. Tax evasion was widespread. The town was used as a refuge from the attentions of Native Authorities by defaulters from Dar es Salaam's hinterland. In addition, urban residents were quite happy to avoid payment as much as possible. From the early-1940s tax raids became a recurring feature of town life. The more systematic the tax regime became, however, the more evasion was brought to light. By the end of the colonial period default of taxes was endemic. This is taken as evidence of the declining legitimacy of the British colonial regime.

In Tanganyika various legislation existed on the statute books aimed at restricting African mobility both within and to Dar es Salaam. It had limited success. In chapter ~~five~~ the emergence in the town of an undifferentiated mass of un- and under-employed Africans who to the colonial mind represented a constant threat to urban order is described. It included jobless 'loiterers', shiftless rickshaw-pullers, beggars, and perhaps most seriously unruly adolescents. Attempts were made to control all these groups, but with the meagre resources available to the urban administration they had limited effect. Anxieties provoked by the presence of these urban undesirables were confirmed by periodic outbreaks of disorder which occurred in the town. The second half of the chapter provides a detailed overview of those instances of disorder which are recorded in surviving sources.

The final part of the thesis deals with colonial attempts to control the 'surplus' population of Dar es Salaam. Chapter ~~six~~ reviews the varied legislation aimed at restricting urban immigration by Africans between the wars. This included laws limiting an African's right to remain in the town without permission from the district office. Legislation also criminalised the presence of jobless Africans, and empowered the District Commissioner to have them repatriated to their areas of origin. Whilst the

unemployed were singled out by colonial legislation, however, they were actually rarely targeted in the inter-war period, during which the urban African population grew relatively slowly. The one time repatriations occurred on any great scale was during the early-1930s, when the depression had resulted in serious urban unemployment. When the same problem emerged once again towards the end of the decade, renewed attention was directed at controlling rural-urban migration which by now was gathering pace. In the early-1940s repatriation of jobless Africans under Township Rule 136(2) was becoming an increasingly frequent ploy used by the district administration. However, its' routine application was rudely interrupted by a hostile legal judgment by a maverick magistrate, Justice McRoberts. Discussion of the controversial McRoberts' ruling occupies the latter part of the chapter.

Chapter eight offers a description of increased rural-urban migration which occurred from the late-1930s, and a tentative explanation of this phenomenon is advanced (although existing data is extremely weak in this area). The official response is then examined. Faced with a rapidly increasing urban African population colonial administrators hankered after some form of pass system to control movement from the rural areas. A number of proposals were put forward along these lines. Whilst such measures were administratively desirable, however, politically they were unacceptable, and Whitehall made sure that no such system was introduced in Tanganyika. This restricted official action to prevent the growth of a 'surplus' population in Dar es Salaam to just one piece of legislation, the Removal of Undesirable Natives (later Persons) Ordinance (Cap.104), which had replaced Township Rule 136(2) after this had been declared *ultra vires* by Justice McRoberts.

Deprived of any other measures to take against the rapidly expanding urban population, Cap.104 was applied with increasing frequency by the district administration, particularly in the closing years of the British administration. By the late-1950s, in the course of daily raids in the township, up to 2,000 Africans were being forcibly removed from the town annually. Chapter nine gives a detailed account of the increased application of repatriation legislation in the final decades of colonial rule. It ends with short biographical sketches of some of the victims of these campaigns. Through these a chink of light is shed upon the lives of individual Africans deported as *wahuni*.

## **Part One**

### **‘The problem of the urban African’<sup>1</sup>: The ‘town native’ and colonial order in Dar es Salaam 1919-1961**

‘The population is hourly increasing in breadth and strength. It is an aggregate of masses, our conception of which clothe themselves in terms which express something portentous and fearful.’

William Cooke Taylor, quoted in Asa Briggs, *Victorian Cities*, (Harmondsworth, 1968), p.61.

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<sup>1</sup> ‘Development of the African Areas of Dar es Salaam Township’ by DO Pike, 12<sup>th</sup> July 1944 in TNA 61/643/3.

## Chapter One

### Urbanisation in comparative perspective

The greater difficulty in the management of the poor occurs in great cities. It is there that vice has spread great temptation, and pleasure her seductions, and folly her allurements: that guilt is encouraged by the hope of her impunity, and idleness fostered by the frequency of example. It is to these great marts of human corruption, that the base and the profligate resort from the simplicity of country life: it is there that they find victims whereon to practise their iniquity, and gains to reward the dangers that attend them. Virtue is there depressed from the obscurity in which it is involved: guilt is matured from the difficulty of its detection: licentiousness is rewarded by the immediate enjoyments which it promises.<sup>1</sup>

The concern provoked amongst colonial officials by the phenomenon of African urbanisation was by no means unique to Tanganyika. Such anxiety had been characteristic of social relations in urban centres in Western societies at least since the industrial revolution began to change the character of their towns and cities from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. In part these anxieties arose from the loosening of traditional structures of control. The urban arena was one in which old social, economic and political formations were broken down and –eventually– were replaced by new ones. Urbanisation led to the atomisation of individuals, and the emergence of distinct –and conflicting– interest groups. In Victorian Britain –the first modern society one can characterise as urbanised– the concentrations of landless workers that began to congregate in the large industrial cities were viewed with mounting concern by contemporary politicians and observers.<sup>2</sup> The first half of the nineteenth century had witnessed the shift from a predominantly rural to a predominantly urban society in Britain and there was great uncertainty amongst ‘respectable’ classes over the consequences of this process. In part, these concerns were articulated in terms of the loss of an idyllic agrarian society characterised by the reciprocal links between rulers and the ruled. They found expression in 19<sup>th</sup> century nostalgia for *Merry England* and in the poetry of the Romantics. As the crucible of the emerging industrial society, urban centres were characterised as the

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<sup>1</sup> Friedrich Engels, *The condition of the working class in England*, trans. & ed. by W.O. Henderson & W.H. Chaloner, (Stanford, CA, 1958), pp.135-6.

<sup>2</sup> See pp.59-87 of Asa Briggs, *Victorian Cities*, (Harmondsworth, 1968) for examples.

location of human degeneration and demoralisation. Stedman-Jones, writing of London's 'respectable' classes in the late-19<sup>th</sup> century, notes that whilst 'the countryside had symbolised the forces of simplicity, strength, phlegm, loyalty and deference' to these people, 'the growing preponderance of the urban population portended the sway of dangerous and volatile populations.'<sup>3</sup> To 19<sup>th</sup> century observers the towns were particularly associated with the acquisition of vices. For many, such as Charles Masterman, who viewed with concern the emergence of 'a new race ...this New Town type' in the East End of London, what was occurring with the shift to the city was a kind of 'demographic degeneration', in which second generation urban citizens were not only 'stunted, narrow-chested, easily wearied' but also 'voluble, excitable, with little ballast, stamina, or endurance – seeking stimulus in drink, in betting, in any unaccustomed conflicts at home or abroad.'<sup>4</sup>

In fact, there was widespread ignorance about the new urban working class communities and about the social forms that were emerging in their midst. Middle class concern over urban growth stemmed from this lack of knowledge. It was largely a fear of the unknown. According to Emsley:

H.A. Fregier coined the term 'les classes dangereuses' in 1840; and while the Parisian poor may, in the event, have been far more dangerous to the bourgeoisie than any of their British counterparts, Fregier's term was rapidly anglicised and taken over by British men of property as much to define their fears as any social group lurking in the city slums.<sup>5</sup>

Briggs observes that to the Victorian middle classes '(t)he 'dark city' and the 'dark continent' were alike mysterious, and it is remarkable how often the exploration of the unknown city was compared with the exploration of Africa and Asia.'<sup>6</sup> William Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army, for example, asked in 1890:

As there is a darkest Africa, is there not also a darkest England? Civilisation, which can breed its own barbarians, does it not also breed its own pygmies? May we not find a parallel at our own doors, and discover within a stone's throw of our cathedrals and palaces similar horrors to those which Stanley has found existing in the great Equatorial forest?<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Gareth Stedman-Jones, *Outcast London*, (Harmondsworth, 1984), p.150.

<sup>4</sup> C.F.G. Masterman, *The Heart of Empire: Discussions of Modern City Life in England* (1901), quoted in A. Lees, *Cities Perceived: Urban society in European and American thought, 1820-1940*, (Manchester, 1985), p.155.

<sup>5</sup> Clive Emsley, *Crime and society in England, 1750-1900*, (London, 1996 (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.)), p.36.

<sup>6</sup> Briggs, *Victorian Cities*, p.62.

<sup>7</sup> General William Booth, *In Darkest England and the Way Out* (1890), quoted in Lees, *Cities*, p.110.

He equated the English slum to the African jungle in its 'monotonous darkness, its malaria and its gloom, its dwarfish de-humanised inhabitants, the slavery to which they are subjected, their privations and their misery.'

Towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century these uncharted territories began to be penetrated by Victorian philanthropists. Men such as Charles Booth and Charles Masterman, both of whom were particularly concerned by the breakdown of community and associated problems in the overcrowded East End of London. In contrasting the organic type of communities to be found in rural areas with the more individualistic, alienated society of the cities, later social scientists refined concerns of pioneers such as Booth and Masterman and began to theorise the social and cultural processes that were occurring in modern society. Durkheim's concept of anomie – a state where 'common values and common meanings are no longer understood or accepted, and new values and meanings have not developed'<sup>8</sup> – is perhaps the best known of these theories of social change and one which was seen to have particular relevance to conditions in the towns and cities of the industrialised world. Durkheim, like many earlier commentators on the process of urbanisation, was 'concerned that the city, together with the spread of 'modern civilisation', was destabilising the 'equilibrium' of certain individuals and prompting degeneracy and deviance.'<sup>9</sup> In America, Robert Park, one of the pioneers of the Chicago school of urban sociology, reached similar conclusions. 'Everyone is more or less on his own in the city', he wrote in 1915. 'The consequence is that man, translated to the city, has become a problem to himself and to society in a way and to an extent that he never was before.'<sup>10</sup>

Concerns aroused by the processes of industrialisation and urbanisation in 19<sup>th</sup> century Britain, and later other Western societies, are echoed by attitudes towards the similar processes occurring a century later in sub-Saharan Africa, as we shall see in the case of Dar es Salaam. In the colonial rhetoric regarding the effects of urban growth in Tanganyika are traces of the Victorian anxiety towards the transformation of British society. There is the same idealisation of country life and corresponding concern over the detachment of the urban migrant from his rural community. In the colonial context,

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<sup>8</sup> This definition is from the Encyclopaedia Britannica CD ROM 1997 version.

<sup>9</sup> Emsley, *Crime*, p.94.



though, the African jungle –or ‘bush’, at least- becomes a virtuous environment instead of a metaphor for vice and demoralisation. Similarly, *Merrie England* could be equated with a conception of *Merrie Africa* in which existed integrated rural African societies governed by unchanging customary regulations. Colonial officials expressed the same concern over the breakdown of traditional structures of control, and the licentiousness of the urban environment. They were, like their counterparts in the West, anxious about an emerging urban ‘mass’; over the corruption that results from the dense concentration of population, amongst which a penchant for criminality is acquired, or the thriftlessness of the stereotyped urbanite. In the ‘detribalised native’ we have the colonial counterpart to Masterman’s ‘New Town type’. Meanwhile, surveys of the African populations of Dar es Salaam and other colonial towns, which found widespread malnutrition and concluded that large numbers of urban Africans were as a result more or less ‘unemployable’, uncovered a ‘demographic degeneration’ similar to that which had been described by Masterman in the East End. The colonial state, like 19<sup>th</sup> century industrial capitalism, had created a monster of its own making. Amongst the immigrants to the urban areas it was the African youth who were a prime focus for concern. The emergence of *wahuni* in Dar es Salaam, or the ‘wharf rats’ of Accra or Lagos, were equally unwelcome as the ‘street urchins’ in the rookeries of London. Colonial perceptions of the negative consequences of African urbanisation are coloured by a sense of the ‘other’ -resulting from an ignorance about African life in the towns- that corresponds with the fear of the unknown inhabitants of the Victorian slums. In the Tanganyikan case the ignorance is deeper still because the cultural and racial barrier between the colonial masters and their subjects is much greater than that which separated the Victorian urban poor from their bourgeois contemporaries. This gap in colonial knowledge only began to be bridged when, as had also occurred in the West, attention was belatedly directed towards the urban areas as the process of urbanisation became acknowledged as irreversible late in the colonial era. Some observers even made explicit the connection between what was occurring in Africa to what had earlier occurred in the West. ‘When we cease looking upon Africa as a completely exotic land,’ wrote P.M. Henry in the *New Commonwealth* in 1954,

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<sup>10</sup> Robert Park, “The city: suggestions for the investigation of human behaviour in the urban environment” (1915), quoted in Lees, *Cities Perceived*, p.301.

we shall recognise the many familiar features of the Industrial Revolution of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Obviously the situation is complicated by racial differences, but fundamentally it is the same.<sup>11</sup>

As parallels can be drawn between colonial Tanganyika and 19<sup>th</sup> century Britain so too, less surprisingly perhaps, are similarities to be found with the colonial experience in other parts of Africa. In the most extreme cases Africans were legally denied the right to reside in urban centres. This was the case in colonial Nairobi and in Salisbury where African labourers had only temporary rights of residence (although the prevalence of migrant labour meant that short-term residents were the commonest type of inhabitant in most African towns in the colonial period). In Southern Rhodesia, observed Gray, '[a]ccording to the theory of segregation they [urban Africans] were not there':

The towns were part of the white man's world. There his interests alone should be considered and his outlook should prevail. The black man's needs and security were to be provided for in the Reserves; there was the centre and focus for his life, and his periods of labour for European employers were merely brief interruptions.<sup>12</sup>

In 1935 the District Officer for Mufulira, on the North Rhodesian Copperbelt, lamented the process of African urbanisation there:

A wholly industrialised Wemba is, I should think, a very unpleasant person indeed, and it will come when this generation grows up here. He will require very strong discipline, he will lose the very powerful discipline of the White Fathers' Mission in the Wemba country, and he will find himself down here an individual instead of as in his own country a section of his family group. I think he will be a very difficult man indeed to manage, and his son will be worse.<sup>13</sup>

Whilst this 'anti-urbanism' was most evident in the settler colonies like Kenya and the Rhodesias -and of course South Africa- it was nevertheless present in some shape or form in colonies throughout Africa. In his 1933 book, *The African Labourer*, Orde Browne, then acting as Colonial Office advisor on African labour, provides a classic example of this colonial prejudice (in this case under the guise of support for rural African tradition):

The structure of primitive tribal society had in itself much to be said for it, and as an experiment in government must be considered a success in its elementary degree. It can be claimed that the system produced a community where crime was rare, pauperism and prostitution unknown, and drunkenness not a serious evil; where, under normal conditions, all were adequately fed, clothed, and housed according to the primitive standard expected;

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<sup>11</sup> P.M. Henry, "The African Townee", *New Commonwealth*, 4<sup>th</sup> March 1954, pp.221/2.

<sup>12</sup> Richard Gray, *The Two Nations*, (London, 1960), pp.110 and 229.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p.111.

and where life could be carried on in wholesome and natural circumstances.<sup>14</sup>

Crime, pauperism, prostitution and drunkenness were, of course, all associated with towns. In the case of East Africa, it was observed in 1955 that in the past:

The theory of indirect rule as well as the personal inclinations of many administrators led to a concentration on the development of rural tribal societies rather than the training of an educated urban elite, and also to the view that the town was not a suitable habitat for a permanent African urban society; there has indeed been a tendency to look upon the 'westernised' African with suspicion. The towns have, therefore, been regarded as bases for administrative and commercial activities rather than as centres of civilising influence, still less of permanent African population.<sup>15</sup>

European ambivalence towards African urbanisation is best exemplified by the legislation designed to impose order and to control movement within and to the urban centres. Measures aimed at jobless Africans in the towns, for example, were rife throughout colonial Africa. They were an early part of the legislation enacted in 'the tidy-minded Belgian Congo',<sup>16</sup> where the urban 'loafer problem' had by the mid-1920s become 'so serious that the Labour Commission of 1925 expressed very strong views and recommended drastic remedies.'<sup>17</sup> In the French colonies 'officials, with an ingrained fear of urban riot, made a 'banal and daily' but ineffective practice of deporting the *population flottante*, which meant almost any unemployed immigrant.'<sup>18</sup> In East Africa the Vagrancy Ordinances of Uganda and Kenya empowered officials to imprison and/or repatriate persons 'found wandering without any visible means of subsistence'<sup>19</sup> just as similar legislation did in Tanganyika. In 1944, no less than eleven municipal bye-laws existed in Nairobi that were aimed at unemployed Natives<sup>20</sup>, and the Voluntarily Unemployed Persons Ordinance of 1950 gave police the power to repatriate undesirables.

Alongside this legislation aimed at enforcing order within the towns were a variety of measures designed to control movement to them. In the Haut Katanga province of the Belgian Congo 'every attempt (was) made to strictly control the entry of Africans into Elisabethville... to try and ensure... that only the requisite number of workers in relation

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<sup>14</sup> Major G. St.J. Orde-Browne, *The African Labourer*, (Oxford, 1933), p.12.

<sup>15</sup> *East Africa Royal Commission 1953-55 Report*, (HMSO, 1961 Ed.) [hereafter: *EARC Report*], p. 201.

<sup>16</sup> Iliffe, *African Poor*, p.190.

<sup>17</sup> Report by Gen. St.J. Orde-Browne on 'Labour conditions in Tanganyika Territory' (Dsm, 1926) [hereafter: Orde-Browne, 'Labour'], para. 115, copy in CO691/83.

<sup>18</sup> Iliffe, *African Poor*, p.190.

<sup>19</sup> 'Ndola Report', p.67.

to the work available (was) permitted to enter the city.'<sup>21</sup> In Southern Rhodesia, on arrival in a town Africans had to obtain a pass to seek work from the Town Pass Officer. After work and accommodation had been obtained the municipality issued a Certificate of Service which was usually valid for a period of three months. A similar registration system was in operation in Kenya before it was replaced by an identification system based on fingerprinting. Visitors to Nairobi were required to obtain a temporary residence permit from the City African Affairs Officer.<sup>22</sup>

Whilst legislation such as that discussed above often existed throughout the colonial period without being significantly altered, official attitudes towards the more general process of African urbanisation began to shift from the late-1930s. A growing awareness of the permanence of African communities emerged. As early as 1935 a British Secretary of State observed, in response to developments in Northern Rhodesia, that 'it will be necessary to accept a degree of detribalisation' in towns on the Copperbelt.<sup>23</sup> Three years later Lord Hailey wrote of African urban populations that whilst '(t)he growth of this class is viewed with some apprehension', colonial administrations foresaw 'the expansion of a class which will eventually become in the full sense detached from tribal life.' Hailey recommended that a new policy should be adopted 'directed to building up an organic social life of a type of which Africa itself offers little experience.'<sup>24</sup> Indeed, after WWII colonial administrations did become increasingly concerned about the social welfare of African urban populations. In part this was a response to the perceived loss of moral and material support which was suffered by the town-dwelling African, detached as he was from his kith and kin in his tribal home. It was also a result of strains on the urban environment which were becoming apparent to colonial officials at this time.

The 1940s saw an acceleration in rates of rural-urban migration which led to rapidly growing urban populations. Colonial administrations had great difficulties developing an infrastructure to keep pace. Nowhere was this more apparent than in the shortage of

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<sup>20</sup> Bye-Laws Numbers 187, 188, 190, 200, 202, 207, and 208 to 212. Deputy PC Pike to CS 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1944, TNA/61/443/1.

<sup>21</sup> Report on a visit to the Belgian Congo to examine African housing, September 1954, in TNA/225/DC01/3/3.

<sup>22</sup> 'Ndola report', pp.63-66, contains information on controls on urban migration and residence in East and Central Africa.

<sup>23</sup> Quoted in Frederick Cooper, *On the African Waterfront*, (New Haven 1987), p.255.

<sup>24</sup> Lord Hailey, *An African Survey*, (London, 1938), p.544.

housing. In Dar es Salaam, massive overcrowding in the African and Asian areas became apparent in the course of WWII, during which the available housing stock actually fell. Overcrowding was only partially –and temporarily- solved by the government housing schemes of the late 1940s and early 1950s. In Nairobi, where stricter building rules resulted in an even more restricted supply of rented accommodation, the number of inhabitants grew by seventeen per cent a year in the 1940s. By 1947 the Kenyan administration estimated that 82,000 Africans were living in housing designed to accommodate only 54,000.<sup>25</sup> It is no coincidence that it was in the 1940s that both Nairobi and Dar es Salaam saw the emergence of the first significant squatter settlements. Further south administrators faced the same problem. In 1944 the Howman Committee, in investigating the living conditions of Africans in Southern Rhodesian towns, found overcrowding everywhere, with the result that ‘Africans squeeze into what rooms they can find, seek out all kinds of shelters about the towns and ‘married’ couples share rooms with bachelors’.<sup>26</sup>

Malnutrition amongst town populations was another urban problem which began to receive increasing attention from the late 1930s. In 1939 the Committee on Nutrition in the Colonial Empire found evidence of widespread malnourishment throughout the empire.<sup>27</sup> In Dar es Salaam in the same year a report estimated that in a town ‘plagued with low rates of wages and a high cost of living’ sixty per cent of workers were employed for wages insufficient to provide a subsistence.<sup>28</sup> Meanwhile, in Kenya, where in 1939 the minimum wage to meet the cost of living in Nairobi was calculated to be 21 Kenyan shillings, the Davies Report found that out of a workforce of 36,000 nearly 16,000 were earning under this amount. Widespread malnutrition was also uncovered in the late 1930s and early 1940s by a number of reports on urban labour in the Rhodesias. Evidence given to the Howman Committee in 1944 was ‘almost unanimous in stating that malnutrition is seriously prevalent everywhere in the urban areas.’<sup>29</sup> On the Copperbelt in

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<sup>25</sup> See Andrew Burton, “Emergence of an African underclass: Nairobi 1954-1971”, unpub. MA diss. (SOAS, 1993).

<sup>26</sup> Quoted in Gray, *Two Nations*, p.252.

<sup>27</sup> *Report of the Cttee. on Nutrition in the Colonial Empire*, (HMSO, 1939), p.151.

<sup>28</sup> ‘Report on Native Affairs in Dar es Salaam Township’ by DO Pike [hereafter: Pike, ‘Native Affairs’], 5<sup>th</sup> June 1939, in TNA/18950/Vol.II.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p.223.

the early-1940s, whilst the average wage was found to be enough to meet basic needs, large numbers of men were earning considerably less.<sup>30</sup>

The low rates of pay prevalent in colonial economies were a product of the predominance of migrant labour. Most Africans working in the towns were on short-term contracts and travelled there alone; this absolved employers of the responsibility of providing a family wage. Migrant workers' continued links with the rural areas subsidised the cost of their labour. Indeed, the notion that wages were merely pocket money for African workers was a widely held belief. 'Their [Africans] pocket is a different one from ours,' a Provincial Commissioner told an enquiry into disturbances on the Copperbelt in 1935,

and the money they put into it still remains for almost the whole population of this territory an unnecessary luxury, that is as far as living is concerned. They can live comfortably without any money at all –not at Nkana [mine] for instance, but when they return to their homes- apart from their payment of revenue. If I am deprived of my salary I starve, but the native in similar circumstances can go home and live as happily as ever.<sup>31</sup>

As Gray has pointed out, this point of view was riddled with error. An African's links with the rural areas were 'in many cases... financially a mixed blessing' with the expectations of rural kin often outweighing the benefits these might bring. Nevertheless, attitudes such as these allowed the payment of often spectacularly inadequate wages to urban African workers to go unremarked until WWII. Increasingly, though, from the early-1940s reports on conditions in urban African communities in East and Central Africa began to conclude that this so-called cheap labour was not in actual fact cheap at all as it was linked to inefficiency. Low rates of pay led to widespread malnutrition amongst migrant labourers. If only for reasons of labour efficiency African standards of living needed to be raised. In Tanganyika, M.J.B. Molohan, a Labour Officer in Dar es Salaam, was just one official who at this time counselled for the introduction of a minimum urban wage.<sup>32</sup> Similarly, in Southern Rhodesia both Ibbotson, in his *Report on a survey of urban African conditions in Southern Rhodesia*, and the Howman Committee both advocated a minimum wage. It was considered that this would

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<sup>30</sup> See A. Lynn Saffery, *A report on some aspects of African living conditions on the Copperbelt of N. Rhodesia*, Lusaka (1943); and R.J.B. Moore, "Native wages and standard of living in Northern Rhodesia", *African Studies*, Vol.1 (1942).

<sup>31</sup> Quoted in Gray, *Two Nations*, pp.116/7.

<sup>32</sup> Report on Unemployment and Wage Rates in Dsm by Labour Officer Molohan [hereafter: Molohan 'Unemployment'], 27<sup>th</sup> September 1941, p.7, in TNA/61/443/1.

give protection against the casual, inefficient rural visitor; lead to more efficient use of labour by certain employers; prevent exploitation; link up with a 'compulsory education' recommendation by preventing the employment of juveniles; and finally would 'provide a floor above which wages would be encouraged to rise' by various measures designed to increase efficiency.<sup>33</sup>

A later Kenyan report, written by Labour Commissioner Carpenter, concluded that under conditions in which migrant labour predominated it was 'clearly illogical to expect that the African worker... (would) be capable of that concentrated and sustained physical effort which we like to associate with the western conception of manual work.'<sup>34</sup> Migrant work, Carpenter noted, entailed the 'shuttling back and forth between two modes of life',<sup>35</sup> and participants in the system were not making a satisfactory adjustment to either. In order to inculcate western attitudes to work it was considered necessary 'to first remove the African from the enervating and retarding influences of his economic and cultural background.'<sup>36</sup> In addition, the migrant labour system was found to be inefficient on account of its high labour turnover and the associated need to continuously recruit and train new workers. A better trained, more reliable workforce was increasingly what was required by post-war employers in the colonies. Migrancy was also causing *administrative* concerns. A growing mass of poorly housed, poorly fed Africans congregating in the urban areas came to constitute a real threat to their smooth administration, a threat made manifest in the strikes and disturbances of the 1940s and early 1950s.<sup>37</sup> Also, as increasing numbers of Africans spent longer periods of time in the urban centres, the traditional, rural sources of authority upon which colonial officials relied came to carry less weight.

Confronted with rapidly expanding town populations, which were often undernourished and ill-housed, over which the colonial state in many cases exercised diminishing control, colonial officials were forced to re-appraise policy with regard to urban areas. 'The urbanisation of the native population in Africa', wrote one commentator in 1954, 'is now recognised as the paramount social development.'<sup>38</sup> In East

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<sup>33</sup> Gray, *Two Nations*, pp.213/4

<sup>34</sup> Kenya Colony, *Report of the Committee on African Wages*, (Nairobi Govt. Printer, 1954), p. 32.

<sup>35</sup> UN report quoted in Cooper, *Waterfront*, p. 261.

<sup>36</sup> Kenya Colony, op. cit., para. 94, p. 11.

<sup>37</sup> Cooper, *Waterfront*, pp. 20-22; see also F. Cooper (Ed.), *Struggle for the city*, (Beverly Hills, 1983), Introduction, pp. 7-48.

<sup>38</sup> Henry, "African Townee", p.220.

Africa the same year, it was the East African Royal Commission which set the tone by announcing:

It is essential to break down the barriers which prevent Africans from full participation in the life of towns. The African must come to regard the towns as places which fully provide him with an outlet for his courage, ability and initiative.<sup>39</sup>

By this time a consensus was emerging, in both London and the East and Central African colonies, over the adoption of a policy of labour stabilisation in the towns. According to one report stabilisation was 'an essential condition of the advance of the African... [one] which should be carefully encouraged and we believe it is a movement which in any case will gradually take place.'<sup>40</sup> As well as addressing the problem of workers productivity, the new labour policy was also hoped to have beneficial consequences for the embattled urban administrations. The creation of a permanent urban workforce receiving substantially higher wages than the old migrant labourers would not only improve the skill levels of African workers, it would also produce a restricted, manageable class of African workers residing in the towns —*with* their families- who had a vested interest in the smooth functioning of the urban economy.

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<sup>39</sup> *EARC Report*, p. 250.

<sup>40</sup> 'Ndola report', pp.6-7.



## Chapter Two

### The colonial mind and African urbanisation in Tanganyika, 1919-1961

#### The emergence of the 'town native': Dar es Salaam 1919-39

In the covering despatch for a 1926 report the Governor of Tanganyika, Donald Cameron, was expressing a commonplace of colonial wisdom when he observed that 'the native in a town, even when employed, is exposed to many temptations and is liable to take to evil ways.'<sup>1</sup> Freedom from the customary constraints of his or her rural home all too often, in the view of colonial officials, combined with the density of the urban population and the dynamism and unfamiliarity of urban life to have a disastrous impact on the native character. So, in 1927, the Labour Commissioner warned that were the drift into towns of unemployed workers to occur on any appreciable scale 'it is difficult to imagine a speedier means of debauching a whole population.'<sup>2</sup> The towns were the location of many evils. It was, according to the 1924 Dar es Salaam district report, 'fatally easy for a native who finds it difficult to earn what he considers a satisfactory wage, to turn to the profits that he can readily secure from such sources as gambling, liquor and prostitution.'<sup>3</sup> Even at leisure the African in Dar es Salaam was felt to be exposed to unsalutary influences. 'The amusements and relaxation provided for the African in the town,' the 1924 district report tells us, 'must all be classed as unedifying in the extreme; the possible exception being the cinema theatres which are censored, and probably do not much harm, if very little good.'<sup>4</sup> 'Education, mission efforts, and closer supervision and control', the 1924 report goes on, 'may, it is hoped, work an improvement; but the present effect of town life on the average African is indubitably most demoralising.'<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Governor Cameron's despatch accompanying Orde-Browne, 'Labour', in PRO/CO691/83.

<sup>2</sup> Labour Dept. AR for 1927, p.51.

<sup>3</sup> DAR for 1924, p.4, TNA/53.4.

<sup>4</sup> DAR for 1924, p.6.

Africans who existed on the fringes of the urban economy and administration were a particular source of official anxiety. The casual labourer only intermittently engaged in employment; the newly arrived immigrant exploiting the hospitality of a town dwelling relative; the local Zaramo from a neighbouring 'native' location; the contract worker at the end of his contract; all were not only prey to the temptations of town life but were also beyond the supervision of the colonial administration. Most disturbingly they were exposed to the corrupting influence of that class of 'native' described as 'detribalised'; the African who had succumbed to temptation and been contaminated by contact with the cosmopolitan milieu of the town.<sup>6</sup> It was the 'detribalised native' to whom the perceived ills of African urban society were invariably ascribed, and whom colonial officials considered to be their principal foe in their struggle to assert control over the urban arena; who, according to the 1926 Police report, was 'the real culprit against peace and good order.'<sup>7</sup> Detribalisation was 'an evil which looms largely in the vision of many administrative officers; it is also the basic idea which makes many native headmen reluctant to allow their people to go to work.'<sup>8</sup> Referring to the 'detribalised town native' the following year, Orde-Browne observed that '(t)his drifting mass of doubtfully employable natives' who lacked 'the moral fibre which might form a safeguard against evil influences' was 'in much need of closer control.'<sup>9</sup> The problem, however, was 'a difficult and elusive one', for whilst it was

desirable to discourage the formation of the detribalised, demoralised element which unfortunately is common in the towns, it is nevertheless far from easy to devise any system of registration or control that will not in practice prove oppressive to the innocent and unsophisticated native, while easily eluded by the type that needs it most.<sup>10</sup>

As increasing numbers of Africans had experience of town life the growth of this detribalised class was a prime concern of inter-war officials. Once in the town the guileless native was considered to be all too easily led down the path to corruption. Orde-Browne, bemoaning the frequent descent of the 'uncontaminated native' into the

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<sup>5</sup> DAR for 1924, p.10.

<sup>6</sup> M.J.B. Molohan, in his 1957 report on *Detribalisation*, (Dsm, 1959), p.11, gives the following definition of the term: '...the effect on Africans that is occasioned by their separation from family, clan and tribal authority as well as from the social codes of behaviour, discipline, custom and perhaps religion which originally guided their thoughts and actions, with the object of making them useful members of the tribe or community to which they belonged.'

<sup>7</sup> Police AR for 1926, p.57.

<sup>8</sup> Orde-Browne, 'Labour', para. 165.

<sup>9</sup> Labour Dept. AR for 1927, p.8.

<sup>10</sup> Labour Dept. AR for 1928, p.10.

‘unemployable loafer’ through contact with the urban environment, warned of ‘the large and growing class of detribalised natives who have fallen away from African social organisation without having qualified themselves to take a place in a Europeanised community.’<sup>11</sup> Part of the problem was the diminishing influence of elders over the growing number of African youths making their way to Dar es Salaam. According to Baker:

the old men usually dislike the town atmosphere... No effort has been made to incorporate them in modern town civilisation and they appear to be somewhat bewildered at the rate and nature of modern progress whilst the younger generation considers that it is more competent to deal with present day affairs than they are and openly scoff them [sic] as inefficient and out of date.<sup>12</sup>

Meanwhile, the colonial administration itself was considered to be ‘a thing apart from native life’.<sup>13</sup> Lacking any form of constructive influence on their behaviour, large numbers of young Africans were to be found in the town who, according to Baker, were ‘devoid of any sense of responsibility’. ‘Such men’, he complained,

are released from all tribal sanctions and often, finding a life of uncontrolled freedom to their liking, remain in the township until they have become so used to an urban existence that they are unfit for any other life.<sup>14</sup>

### **Attitudes towards African urbanisation in the 1940s**

Beginning in the late 1930s a shift in attitude took place amongst Tanganyikan officials towards the African urban population, a shift that corresponded with the similar process that occurred in British colonies throughout East and Central Africa. Whilst concern over the demoralising effects of town life on Africans continued to be expressed, many officials recognised that a permanent African community in Dar es Salaam –one which in the future was likely to grow substantially- was an established fact, and that new initiatives were required in order to achieve the proper development of this community. A number of factors led to this reappraisal. There was growing awareness of the poor living and working conditions suffered by the majority of Africans in the town. Second, from

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<sup>11</sup> Orde-Browne, ‘Labour’, para. 114.

<sup>12</sup> Memo on the Social Conditions of Dsm, E.C. Baker, 4<sup>th</sup> June 1931[hereafter: Baker, ‘Social Conditions’], p.72. Copy in author’s possession – also in SOAS archive.

<sup>13</sup> Baker, ‘Social Conditions’, p.72.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p.70.

the late 1930s there was a surge in the growth rate of Dar es Salaam's African population. Finally, the prospect of a fully urbanised African community, whose links with their rural homes had been severed, was no longer perceived to be such a cause for alarm (as long as it was guided down proper channels). The shift in approach was also a reflection of the new African policy emerging from Whitehall in the course of the 1940s, in which indirect rule by chiefs was to give way to representative local government involving educated Africans.<sup>15</sup> The focus had shifted from the preservation of traditional loyalties to the creation of a new, purportedly more democratic, set of values, which if anything stood more chance of being inculcated by urban than by rural Africans.

The impecunious existence suffered by the majority of Dar es Salaam's African population was first observed in a 1939 report by DO Pike in which he calculated that a majority of employees were being paid 'sub-marginal' wages.<sup>16</sup> Conditions actually deteriorated over the next few years. Whilst the cost of living rose steeply in the early 1940s, wages remained at the same low level, becoming, in the words of one Labour Officer, 'more sub-marginal than ever.'<sup>17</sup> Meanwhile, a shortage of housing was leading to the accentuation of slum conditions in the African township. What resulted from the high demand for and the limited supply of housing were ever higher rents which, along with the poor wages paid to workers, were leading to homelessness amongst the town's African population. It was, according to Molohan, 'a common sight for natives to be seen sleeping out at night in public places and buildings or on verandahs of private houses simply because they are unable to pay for a night's lodging.'<sup>18</sup>

By the early 1940s officials were acknowledging that the conditions of existence experienced by the majority of Africans in Dar es Salaam were simply unacceptable. Something had to be done, not only to alleviate the position of the urban African but also to effect a more orderly organisation of labour. Social, political *and* economic imperatives made it essential that the 'vicious circle of low wages and sub-human living conditions on the one hand and laziness and unwillingness to work on the other' was broken.<sup>19</sup> In particular, it was important that the growing problem of urban joblessness

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<sup>15</sup> See R.D. Pearce, *Turning Point in Africa*, (London, 1982), for a discussion of this policy.

<sup>16</sup> Pike, 'Native Affairs', p.9.

<sup>17</sup> Molohan, 'Unemployment', p.4.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Suggestion for PC's conference agenda, AO Mafia to PC, 27<sup>th</sup> May 1943, TNA/61/702/3. Although this

was addressed. In his report on unemployment Molohan had recorded that 'he felt... in Dar es Salaam we may be regarded as sitting on top of a volcano which may erupt at any moment. With the return of demobilised natives after the war the eruption may be all the more imminent.'<sup>20</sup> Anticipating solutions which were to be adopted throughout much of East and Central Africa in the following decade, Molohan advocated a hike in wages - through the imposition of a minimum urban wage- accompanied by stricter controls over urban residence and over movement to the towns. The wisdom of the latter objective, the regulation of rural-urban migration was widely echoed in official correspondence at the time and in 1944 legislation was passed that was aimed at controlling the town population, although the pass system advocated by many officials was never introduced. Efforts to increase the levels of pay received by African workers were more half-hearted. Legislation for a minimum wage, although first enacted in 1939<sup>21</sup> (and amended in 1947) was not actually put into effect until some seventeen years later.

Conditions in Dar es Salaam had not been helped by the town's rapid growth in the late 1930s and early 1940s. In spite of there being 'insufficient work available for the normal town residents as it is',<sup>22</sup> large numbers of persons were entering Dar es Salaam in search of employment, particularly from neighbouring districts such as Uzaramu, Rufiji, Morogoro and Bagamoyo. 'This drift was unacceptable', wrote the Provincial Commissioner in 1943, because 'besides increasing the difficulties of the Administration [it] means the withdrawal of agriculturalists from food production to non-productive, non-essential jobs and the tendency must be stopped.'<sup>23</sup> The situation was further exacerbated by the introduction of a rationing system in 1943 which 'acted like a magnet in attracting natives to the town who wished to be ensured a regular means of procuring foodstuffs.'<sup>24</sup> In the six years up to 1944 the town's African population had increased by more than 50 per cent, from 26,000 to approximately 40,000,<sup>25</sup> and District Officer Pike anticipated (correctly) that there was 'every prospect that this increase will continue in an

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comment was made by an officer presiding over a rural district he pointed out that '(t)his state of affairs is particularly bad in and around townships' - it is likely he had Dsm uppermost in mind.

<sup>20</sup> Molohan, 'Unemployment', p.7.

<sup>21</sup> Ordinance no.19 of 1939.

<sup>22</sup> Political Dsm to Political Utete, 17<sup>th</sup> June 1942, TNA/540/27/13.

<sup>23</sup> Provicer, Dsm to Political, Rufiji, Morogoro and Bagamoyo, 21<sup>st</sup> December 1943, TNA/61/443/1.

<sup>24</sup> Quarterly Labour report by DO Dsm (for quarter ending 30<sup>th</sup> September 1943), TNA/61/14/30.

<sup>25</sup> Memo on the Development of African areas of Dar es Salaam Township by DO Pike, 12<sup>th</sup> July 1944, [Hereafter: Pike, 'Development'] TNA/61/643/3.

ever growing stream after the war.’<sup>26</sup>

Conscious of this development, officials became increasingly anxious about the return of demobilised soldiers, amongst whom, it was anticipated, many would be impatient of life in their rural districts of origin, opting instead to remain in Dar es Salaam. There was going to be, according to a secretariat minute, ‘a much larger proportion than hitherto of sophisticated and travelled natives who have seen the world and are likely to be restless and discontented with their conditions, and contemptuous of tribal discipline’.<sup>27</sup> ‘Demobilised Africans’, predicted Pike, ‘will flock to the towns as the only places where can be found the money, the food, the pleasures and not least the comradeship to which army life has accustomed them.’<sup>28</sup> Indeed, in a letter to the Provincial Commissioner a month earlier, he had pointed out:

It is common knowledge that a high proportion of our conscripts were ‘town roughs’. These men will have learnt discipline and how to work; they will also have gained experience of life. If we can place them in work, they may settle down; if they fail to find work, they will revert to being ‘town roughs’ – with such additional experience in ‘roughness’ as will make them a serious problem.<sup>29</sup>

As early as 1942 Baker was reporting concern on the part of the Governor that measures be put in place to deal with ex-soldiers settling in Dar es Salaam as they otherwise would ‘be liable to lead a profitless existence in the town if left to their own devices.’<sup>30</sup> The Governor’s foresight, however, did not appear to be acted upon. The following year Pike observed that nothing had been done about this ‘urgent problem’ and that government departments, if they could be said to be doing anything, were actually contributing to the problem by giving preference in employment to ‘non-service persons’.<sup>31</sup> It appears that after the war had ended demobilised soldiers continued to suffer from neglect as in 1946 the District Officer for Uzaramo complained that ‘(n)othing is being done for these men: they are going to seed and becoming a serious problem in Dar es Salaam and possibly other Townships.’<sup>32</sup> By this time the influx of ex-servicemen, along with continuing rural-urban migration, had helped increase Dar es Salaam’s African population to around

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Minute by W.E.J. to CS, 7<sup>th</sup> May 1943, TNA/61/702/3.

<sup>28</sup> DO Pike to the Secretary of the Township Development Sub-committee, 11<sup>th</sup> September 1944, TNA/61/643/3.

<sup>29</sup> DO Pike to PC, EP, 24<sup>th</sup> August 1944, TNA/61/686/16.

<sup>30</sup> PC Baker to CS, 16<sup>th</sup> July 1942, TNA/61/443/1.

<sup>31</sup> Suggestions for PC’s conference agenda by DC Pike, 12<sup>th</sup> May 1943, TNA/61/702/3.

<sup>32</sup> Political, Uzaramu to PC, EP, 1<sup>st</sup> August 1946, TNA/61/502/pt.1.

45,000.<sup>33</sup>

Corresponding with this expansion of Dar es Salaam's population was a growing awareness of the permanence of African communities located in the urban areas and a new sense of urgency amongst colonial officials to devise a policy to cope with this phenomenon. Prompted by Lord Hailey, Tanganyikan administrators were coming to realise that 'the urban centres have an importance which has not been fully appreciated by African Administrations.'<sup>34</sup> According to the 1944 report of the Township Development Sub-committee '(t)he whole question of African development in urban communities merits the closest investigation on the part of Government.' What is more, members of the committee could 'find no record that any considered Government policy in regard of urban Africans has either been propounded or implemented and we recommend that this defect be remedied at a very early date.'<sup>35</sup> At the same time officials were becoming more sanguine about the dangers of urbanisation in general, and of 'detribalisation' in particular. By the end of the decade attitudes had moved on so far on this score that in 1948 it was being pointed out that '(i)n the long run it will probably be accepted that tribalism has a retarding effect on the progress of the African community of the Territory (or East Africa) as a whole, and hence the long-term effect of detribalisation cannot be regarded as detrimental.'<sup>36</sup>

At a time when indirect rule was being abandoned, tribal sanction was no longer perceived to be so important in governing African behaviour. It was essential, however, that a new set of values emerged to take the place of customary rights and responsibilities. At the end of the war the problems of the towns *and* their inhabitants were seen as being at least in part attributable to administrative neglect between the wars. In Dar es Salaam this neglect was evident not only in the lack of physical 'development' in Zone III but also in the failure to foster amongst town-dwelling Africans a respectable urban identity to replace their former 'tribal' ones. According to District Officer Pike, '(t)he one feature that is predominant in all past schemes in dealing with the urban African is that they have failed and instead of people with some degree of civic consciousness, everywhere one finds the African urban populations steeped in poverty,

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<sup>33</sup> Uzaramo DAR for 1946, TNA/3/XV/A.

<sup>34</sup> Lord Hailey, *Survey*, p.543.

<sup>35</sup> Report of the Township Development Sub-committee, 29<sup>th</sup> August 1944, TNA/61/643/3.

crime and filth with all the selfishness of town 'stiffs'.<sup>37</sup> The provincial report for the following year, meanwhile, phrased the position thus:

The present system in the township serves within certain limits but it provides insufficient outlet for the intelligentsia in the management of affairs and also insufficient discipline for the less sophisticated elements in the population.<sup>38</sup>

What post-war officials should be aiming for was 'to make the urban African a better citizen with a civic conscience.'<sup>39</sup> This would be achieved by devoting more resources to the African community and its area of residence, and, perhaps most importantly, in encouraging greater African participation in township affairs. Indeed, beginning in 1941, when the Township Authority was expanded to include one unofficial African member for the first time, the 1940s saw Dar es Salaam's administration undergo reorganisation on a number of occasions, each adjustment resulting in increased African participation in government.

### **Remaking urban society: official policy in the 1950s**

The rapid expansion of the African population of Dar es Salaam in the preceding ten years<sup>40</sup> had by the early 1950s led to urban development in Tanganyika ascending the political agenda. As the township burgeoned it became increasingly clear that new policies were required to address this situation. It was recognised, however, that a prime obstacle to the formation of any realistic new policy was official ignorance of what was actually going on in the African areas of the town. In response to this a preliminary survey of Dar es Salaam was commissioned. It was conducted by two South African sociologists who had just completed research on the town of Jinja, in neighbouring Uganda.<sup>41</sup> In their estimation a comprehensive survey of Dar es Salaam was essential as a foundation for any new approach to dealing with the African urban population. When details of the proposed full-scale survey of Dar es Salaam reached the Standing Finance Committee, however, the members of the committee blanched at the envisaged costs and

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<sup>36</sup> Memo on the Effects of Detribalisation dated 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1948, TNA/37520.

<sup>37</sup> Pike, 'Development', TNA/61/643/3.

<sup>38</sup> PAR for 1945, p.31.

<sup>39</sup> Pike, 'Development'.

<sup>40</sup> See Appendix 1.

<sup>41</sup> Mr. and Mrs. R. and C. Sofer. Their report on Jinja was published as *Jinja Transformed*, East African



the Sofers returned to Jinja. Officials responsible for the administration of the African urban population reacted to this setback with dismay. A senior government official berated the short-sightedness of this decision:

The rapid 'urbanisation' of our African population is one of the most solid, urgent and vital facts of the time, and it is giving rise to a great number of important problems... It is not possible to walk or drive from here to Ilala Football Ground or to the Hide Sheds on the Pugu Road without seeing evidence of the fact...<sup>42</sup>

As the decade progressed, however, the situation in Dar es Salaam apparently became serious enough for the SFC to revise their decision and in 1956 a detailed social survey of the town was carried out. Indeed, such was the interest in Tanganyika's urban areas in general that two further surveys were conducted of towns within the territory around the same time; one of Africans living in the northern town of Arusha, and another which looked at the situation of detribalised workers in both the plantation areas of Tanga region, as well as in Tanga town itself.<sup>43</sup> In addition, research was being carried out by a government appointed committee –whose report was eventually published in 1959<sup>44</sup>– on the phenomenon of detribalisation in the territory as a whole, with special reference to the urban areas,<sup>45</sup> and to Dar es Salaam in particular. In conjunction with the material on East African towns produced by the (slightly earlier) East Africa Royal Commission (EARC) report, this burst of activity in the mid-1950s was unprecedented. By this time though, it was acknowledged that 'the urban proletariat have in history played an important part in changes in society' and that '(a)lthough the (African) urban community is estimated as being as little as two per cent they are nonetheless an important percentage.'<sup>46</sup> 'They are, however,' the minutes revealingly continue, 'handicapped unless *we can arrange* urban, social and political life to help them.'<sup>47</sup> Without more information on African urban society this was unlikely to occur.

In the early-1950s the same fundamental problems continued to vex colonial

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Studies no.5 (EASIR, Kampala: 1955).

<sup>42</sup> Minute by MSS (Minister for Social Services?), 25<sup>th</sup> September 1951, TNA/18950/Vol.III.

<sup>43</sup> Social Survey of Arusha Township Africans by C.J.K. Latham (Social Development Officer), 1957, in TNA/225/PA8.06B; & Dr. P.H. Gulliver, *Alien Africans in Tanga Region*, (Dsm, 1956).

<sup>44</sup> Molohan, *Detribalization*.

<sup>45</sup> Detribalisation was not confined to urban areas as may be assumed; it was also believed to occur at plantations, mines and other rural locations where large numbers of migrant workers congregated.

<sup>46</sup> Minutes of meeting of Committee on African Detribalisation, (January?) 1956, TNA/225/PA.8.06A. My italics.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

administrators in Dar es Salaam as had done in the previous decade. Of greatest concern was the uninterrupted tide of rural-urban migrants which persisted seemingly unaffected by the increasing application of legislation against urban 'undesirables'. 'One of the biggest problems which faces us', complained the Provincial Commissioner of Eastern Province in 1953, 'is the question of uncontrolled migration into the big towns, with the presence of a floating, constantly changing, moneyless, propertyless, and often jobless class amounting at present often to thousands.'<sup>48</sup> It was not only the *numbers* of the urban immigrants that was causing concern but their character also. According to the Labour Department report of the same year whilst '(o)stensibly such individuals may be said to be seeking employment...judging from the relatively small number who register for work at employment exchanges it is probable that the greater proportion are attracted to the towns by the possibility of making a living by dubious means.'<sup>49</sup> A year earlier Governor Twining had seen fit to complain to the Colonial Office that

the movement of Africans to the towns has gained momentum since the war and shows no signs of abating. The lure of the town has, on the contrary, increased and the number of unemployed Africans in townships, including numerous juveniles, who eke out an existence by breaking the law or preying on their fellows grows daily.<sup>50</sup>

In spite of the increasing tolerance towards the process of African urbanisation, in the official imagination the urban environment continued to be one in which moral degeneracy abounded; and increasing rural-urban migration meant that growing numbers of Africans were at risk of contamination. According to a 1952 memorandum by the Acting Member for Local Government: 'The evils and dangers which can result if this drift is allowed to continue unchecked are well known.'<sup>51</sup>

These 'evils and dangers' included not only the lure of petty crime but also urban alienation. According to the administration's Senior Sociologist '[m]odern conditions were forcing Africans into a position where they had no cultural anchor and were therefore liable to become discontented.'<sup>52</sup> The authors of the EARC report concurred:

In the towns Africans are confronted with a new way of life in which they join as isolated individuals, who must provide for their own material, mental and emotional needs. In many

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<sup>48</sup> PAR for 1953, p.40.

<sup>49</sup> Labour Dept. AR for 1953, p.33.

<sup>50</sup> Twining to Rogers, 21<sup>st</sup> November 1952, TNA/21616/Vol.III.

<sup>51</sup> Memo. No.68 for Executive Council, 6<sup>th</sup> May 1952, TNA/21616/Vol.III.

<sup>52</sup> Extract from minutes of Provincial Advisory Council, Tanga, 27<sup>th</sup>/28<sup>th</sup> September 1955, TNA/225/PA.8/06A.

towns, the facilities for doing so are lacking, which leads to the resort to drunkenness and crime by those who, fresh from a life in a community which exercises considerable control over the thoughts and actions of its members, are almost entirely lacking in those resources of mind and character which would give them the capacity to develop interests at their leisure.<sup>53</sup>

In 1954, the District Commissioner of Dar es Salaam echoed these comments, observing that 'in the urban areas where the cohesive and disciplinary sanctions of tribal life and authority are lacking... Africans are living in circumstances to which they have not adapted themselves fully.'<sup>54</sup> There was precious little evidence of the 'civic consciousness' which some officials in the 1940s had hoped could be nurtured in the urban African population. In their preliminary survey the Sofers had reported 'an ignorance among citizens which may be widespread concerning their rights, obligations and responsibilities.'<sup>55</sup> E.G. Rowe, Commissioner for Eastern Province in 1954, recalled 'it was very difficult to get any civic sense, even in the crudest interpretation of that term, going among this shifting population.'<sup>56</sup> Attempts had been made to correct this partly through the establishment of a network of Ward Councils to which Africans were elected. Their role in the administration of Dar es Salaam though, was negligible, and in the view of DC Harris they would 'not be an important factor in the development of citizenship until they [we]re given some powers.'<sup>57</sup>

Although the post-war period had been one of relative affluence, poor living and working conditions experienced by the majority of the town's African population also remained a prime concern of colonial officials in the early 1950s. Whilst there had been an upswing in the urban economy after the war, there had been a corresponding increase in the town's population. 'At the moment,' reported the *Tanganyika Standard* in 1952, 'the territory is passing through a stage of great prosperity, but in Dar es Salaam there is definite hardship.'<sup>58</sup> '[T]o obtain money for the bare necessities of life', the report continued, 'the score of 'duka ya rahani' [pawn shops] scattered strategically in the African areas of town have a constant stream of clients.' These insignificant little shops, the *Standard* warned, with their 'piles of clothes and stoves', were 'a red danger signal

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<sup>53</sup> EARC report, page unknown (Quoted in: Social Development to MLG 28<sup>th</sup> November 1955, TNA/17396).

<sup>54</sup> DC, Dsm to PC, EP, 12<sup>th</sup> May 1954, TNA/540/1/23.

<sup>55</sup> Sofers' Report, p.1.

<sup>56</sup> Interview, p.38, RH/Mss.Afr.s.1698.

<sup>57</sup> Minutes of meeting of Committee on African Detribalisation, (December?) 1956, TNA/225/PA.8/06A.

<sup>58</sup> TS, 8<sup>th</sup> March 1952, p.19.

which the leaders of all communities might do well to bear in mind.' Growing numbers of intermittently employed and jobless Africans were to be found in Dar es Salaam; a situation which no doubt contributed to the low rates of pay which continued to be prevalent there. In 1953 the Dar es Salaam British Legion discovered that the average wage of unskilled labourers (who constituted the majority of the town's workforce) was insufficient to meet their needs by at least 25 per cent. According to its report the average worker

enjoyed good meals for the first few days of the month and thereafter is faced with the alternatives of:

- a) Semi-starvation for the remainder of the month, or
- b) Frequent visits to the pawnbroker, or
- c) Petty theft and pilfering, or
- d) Various forms of spivvery, or (b), (c) and (d).<sup>59</sup>

Confirming these findings, the budget survey of 1956/7 reported that indebtedness was endemic amongst the town's African residents.<sup>60</sup> Commenting on the survey Leslie observes: '...groups were taken from the lowest range of wages up to the comparatively high wage of Shs.150/- and over, and in almost every case a steady income from net borrowing was shown to form a significant proportion of the total income.'<sup>61</sup> Although decasualisation of dockworkers had, from 1950, slowly been taking place, no fundamental change had occurred in the overall organisation of labour. The Dar es Salaam workforce continued to be characterised by its poverty, its impermanence, its unreliability and its lack of productivity. The result, according to Leslie, was a vicious circle of inefficiency: 'So long as there is an abundance of low-quality labour at low rates of pay, the labourer has no incentive to improve output, nor the employer to improve the quality of his staff.'<sup>62</sup> What is more these poorly paid workers also remained poorly housed. Although efforts had been made since the late 1940s, by both central and municipal government, to address the shortage of housing, African residents, particularly in the inner areas of Kariakoo and Ilala, continued to suffer from overcrowding. There was, according to the District Commissioner in 1953, 'an acute shortage of houses'.<sup>63</sup> Meanwhile, as the Provincial Commissioner observed four years earlier, on the outskirts of Dar es Salaam 'shanty towns... continue to exist and are a menace to health and a

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<sup>59</sup> Report by British Legion on Cost of Living in Dar es Salaam, 4<sup>th</sup> February 1953, TNA/540/16/15.

<sup>60</sup> Budget survey of African consumers in Dar es Salaam 1956/7, TNA/225/PA.8/06A.

<sup>61</sup> Leslie, *Survey*, p.139. This survey was originally submitted to the colonial administration in 1957.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p.6.

<sup>63</sup> DC, Dsm to MLG, 27<sup>th</sup> February 1953, TNA/540/27/19.

breeding ground of discontent.<sup>64</sup>

Dar es Salaam's housing, like much of its infrastructure, was getting overwhelmed by the influx of Africans entering the town. According to the Director of Town Planning this was simply unsustainable, placing an ever-escalating financial burden on Dar es Salaam's wealthier residents:

There is a growing flow of people from the country to the town, and these people, when they arrive, contribute little to the economic or industrial structure of the towns. Enormous new neighbourhoods have to be provided, which tend to spread the towns over ever-increasing areas, all of which must be supplied with some form of public services. The continual expansion of public services has to be paid for, and the tax revenue from the African is insufficient for this. Thus towns are becoming increasingly expensive to run and maintain, with no concomitant increase in revenue from those causing the increased expense. A relatively small body of heavy taxpayers is carrying around its neck an ever increasing number of people who do not (and can not) pay their way, and the whole economic structure of our larger towns is in my opinion becoming unsound.<sup>65</sup>

In response to this situation, colonial officials adopted a number of initiatives. The intensification of action against urban 'undesirables' was the most significant, although it did nothing to reverse the urban-ward tide. Most unusual was the propaganda film *Mohogomchungu* (translated by the *Tanganyika Standard* as 'The country bumpkin'), which sought to persuade rural folk of the evils and dangers of town life. The *Standard* summarised the plot as follows:

The film is about a country-boy who, as the translation hints, feels the age-old urge to visit the big city -in this case Dar es Salaam- and sets out via a sisal estate, where he earns enough money to finance his wanderlust.

Rashidi Kawawa, cleverly portraying the bumpkin in his first film part, has a most trying time in the big city, where his rusticity is ill-suited to the streamlined urban mode of life.

After being sent sprawling by a car, fleeced of his money by cardsharps, robbed of his clothes, mixed up in a dripping wet fire-fighting incident, struck on the head by the irate husband of an African girl he admires, and generally subjected to a very tough passage - the bumpkin is well content to return to working the *shamba* with his parents.<sup>66</sup>

'[T]he incidents are given unbroken continuity by the country bumpkin theme,' reported the *Standard*, 'which is never lost sight of throughout the film.' Ironically, the most this film can be said to have done was to promote the career of the future unionist and

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<sup>64</sup> PAR for 1949, p.38.

<sup>65</sup> Minute by D.T.P., 7<sup>th</sup> March 1953, TNA/225/DC3602.

<sup>66</sup> TS, 21<sup>st</sup> June 1952, p.8.

nationalist, Kawawa, who, as an employee of the Social Development Department, had landed the leading role.<sup>67</sup> There is, on the other hand, no evidence of *Mohogomchungu* having any influence whatsoever on the growing number of migrants making their way to the capitol. Even if it had, this would only have had a mitigating influence on the problems facing Dar es Salaam. These required a much more dramatic solution than a simple restriction of internal migration. By the mid-1950s, though, a more substantial answer had begun to emerge.

### **The East African Royal Commission and urban development**

Whilst many officials in Dar es Salaam had, since before the end of the war, been counselling that a raise in African wages coupled with the control of immigration into the towns was the best approach to dealing with the problems of the urban areas, it was not until the early-1950s that such views got a public airing. In 1951, a committee on manpower in Tanganyika recommended a territorial policy of labour stabilisation.<sup>68</sup> In the towns this would have the benefit of not only promoting greater productivity, through the reduction in casual labour, but it would also, according to the 1951 Labour Department report, promote the civic consciousness which up till that point had been noticeable by its absence. 'Problems inherent in urban areas today', declared the report, 'are the regular employment of African unskilled labour and the evolution of a social order by which some form of moral discipline will be imposed on detribalised urban Africans.'<sup>69</sup> A policy of stabilisation would address both these difficulties in one fell swoop. However, in the early-1950s all that was done to promote labour stabilisation was the extension of the maximum permissible contract for workers accompanied by their wives and families from two to three years. The initiative passed to neighbouring Kenya, where, in 1954, the publication of the influential Carpenter Report introduced a systematic new approach to the question of urban labour. It recommended the replacement of Kenya's irregular and poorly paid migrant workforce with a smaller,

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<sup>67</sup> According to J. Vinter, who served in the Tanganyika service in the post-war period, Kawawa became the first Tanganyikan film star: 'his films were immensely popular long before he became PM, whenever one of Rashidi's films appeared in Tabora marketplace, roars of applause. So he had... the same sort of pull which a radio personality, or TV personality, in England now, who goes into politics, he immediately has an enormous advantage.' Interview, RH/Mss.Afr.s.1999.

<sup>68</sup> TS, 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1951, p.8.

<sup>69</sup> Labour Dept. AR for 1951.

permanent urban African population, receiving higher wages which would enable them to establish and maintain their families in the towns.

The following year a similar approach to urban and labour questions in the region was proposed by the East African Royal Commission. 'The part played by Africans in the towns', the authors of the report observed:

is now more important and they themselves have become increasingly dependent on wage-earning employment. They are still, however, regarded socially and financially as liabilities for whose housing and welfare the urban authorities are responsible. The problem is to make it possible for them to become an element in town life which shares responsibility with other communities for the development of the towns and which also contributes to urban revenues.<sup>70</sup>

Both the poor conditions of town life and the high turnover of temporary labour, however, were creating an environment in which it was difficult to forge such a community of responsible urban Africans. Indeed, according to the Commission, the African communities which *were* emerging in East African towns were shifting and impermanent ones amongst whom 'crime, immorality and drunkenness' were rife. These communities contained individuals who were freed 'not only from the influences that customarily control (their) behaviour but also from the responsibilities of family life'<sup>71</sup>. Individuals that is, with no stake in the urban order. 'The maintenance of order', complained the authors

depends in the last resort on the active support of public opinion, which hardly exists where the majority of the population consists of rootless and irresponsible individuals, who have neither family responsibilities nor property to give them an interest in supporting the authorities.<sup>72</sup>

'The first step in the formation of a healthy urban society', the authors advised, 'is the growth of a settled urban population whose loyalties are directed towards the town rather than to their areas of origin.'<sup>73</sup>

One way to achieve this was through greater African participation in municipal government – including giving some executive and financial responsibility to Africans. This would encourage 'a sense of responsibility among [African urban residents] and

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<sup>70</sup> *EARC Report*, p.201.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, p.237.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, p.209.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p.214.

would result in a full contribution from them towards the services which they enjoy.’<sup>74</sup> In addition, various recommendations were put forward to improve housing conditions in the townships, improvements which, it was hoped, would also encourage long-term urban residence. Building regulations should be relaxed, land should be made available and Africans should be helped to build their own houses; home ownership was to be encouraged ‘wherever possible’. Priority of access to educational facilities for the children of town dwelling Africans was mooted, as was the extension of provident fund schemes and the introduction of old age pensions for long-term urban workers to replace the social security implicit in the organisation of rural communities.

The principal plank of the policy of stabilisation though, was an increase in the rate of wages paid to African urban workers. Better pay would enable the African worker to move his family to the town, would lead to an improvement in his conditions of existence there and would diminish the importance of maintaining links with his rural home. The permanent urban employee would be a more efficient worker, he would be easier to administer, and in addition would be better equipped to contribute towards municipal revenue. It was recognised that economic expansion was essential in order for wages to rise towards a level which would support family life in the towns, and that consequently the process of stabilisation would be a slow one. Nevertheless, the authors observed the ‘paramount need to create a settled African labour force’<sup>75</sup> and recommended that ‘[e]very effort must, on the other hand be made to create conditions which are favourable to it.’<sup>76</sup>

It was anticipated that one of the likely side-effects of this policy of stabilisation was an increase in the number of urban immigrants. Although the authors of the report had noted that considerable concern over urban drift already existed amongst officials in East Africa, however, they concluded that control over movement to the towns was undesirable. In the first place, it was disagreeable on economic grounds ‘because it restricts mobility and therefore inhibits the development of the exchange economy’.<sup>77</sup> Second, it was simply impracticable; ‘systems of control,’ the authors observed,

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid., p.249.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., p.158.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., p.214.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., p.240. The development of the exchange economy would encourage increasing specialisation of labour, which in the view of the Commission was necessary in order to raise standards of living in both



'although rigorously enforced have broken down even in territories where the population is sparser and the towns more isolated than in East Africa.'<sup>78</sup> They advised that whilst steps should be taken to improve conditions in the rural areas, and so limit the attraction of an urban life, '(t)he continued growth of the population of the towns at a rate which is unpredictable must be accepted.'<sup>79</sup>

### **The Tanganyikan response**

The EARC report had an impact on urban policy in all three East African territories. In Tanganyika the immediate response of officials was ambivalent. Whilst the benefits of a policy of stabilisation were broadly accepted in principle, the practicalities of achieving it in the Territory were questioned. Officials were particularly concerned about the consequences of stabilisation for those Africans who had severed their links with their home areas only to find themselves without an income at the end of their working life or as a result of unemployment. 'A rapid turnover of labour is inefficient', the Tanganyikan Government noted in their preliminary observations to the report, 'but at present ties with the tribal areas constitute a certain security for old age and sickness and will continue to do so until equally acceptable monetary forms of social security are provided in exchange.'<sup>80</sup> As MacMillan observes, 'Tanganyika remained too poor to be in much of a position to put the [EARC] recommendations into effect'.<sup>81</sup> Although officials could see the benefits of stabilisation, the administration could not afford to establish some form of adequate social security to replace that which resulted from Africans' continued links with their country kin; neither were they in a position to persuade employers to do so.

Of equal concern to Tanganyikan officials was the apparently laissez faire attitude adopted in the Royal Commission report towards rural-urban migration. For those responsible for the administration of Dar es Salaam and the territory's other rapidly growing urban centres, there was no way that the unfettered movement which the Commission recommended could be countenanced. Indeed, the years which followed the

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rural and urban areas in East Africa.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., p.240.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., p.240.

<sup>80</sup> Preliminary observations by the Tanganyika Government on EARC report, PRO/CO822/1113.

<sup>81</sup> Hugh MacMillan, "The East Africa Royal Commission 1953-1955", in Low and Smith (eds.) *History of*

publication of the report saw more concerted –if not entirely successful- attempts being made to control the flow to the towns, and by the mid-1950s more Africans were being repatriated from Dar es Salaam than at any previous time. At their bi-annual conference of June 1955, Tanganyika's Provincial Commissioners discussed a whole raft of measures aimed at controlling African immigration into towns. In their discussion of the establishment of a Minimum Wage Board for Dar es Salaam they went so far as to question the wisdom of introducing a family wage in order to encourage stabilisation (in place of the then-current bachelor rates), noting that one of the consequences would be to 'militate against the control of immigration by attracting rural workers.'<sup>82</sup>

The Tanganyikan government was sympathetic to the broader recommendations of the EARC. The spectre of detribalisation had been superseded in the official mind by the recognition of the need to foster a new urban identity amongst town dwelling Africans, and Tanganyikan officials were very much in step with EARC proposals that greater civic responsibility should be fostered amongst Africans living in the urban areas through extending the scope for their participation in town life. Although there may still have been differences over the optimum duration of African urban residence, it was, as DC Harris put it at a meeting on detribalisation in 1956, 'immaterial whether a man is permanently or temporarily detribalised: in Dar es Salaam we have got to stimulate the growth of the feeling of citizenship.'<sup>83</sup>

Just one year after the publication of the EARC report, the Tanganyikan government was instigating its own investigation into 'the development and growth of new communities in urban and peri-urban areas'. The emergence of such communities was now seen as both inevitable and, from the point of view of enhanced economic efficiency and the productivity of labour, as advisable. By this time it was an accepted fact that:

there are in varying degrees both in the urban and some rural areas of Tanganyika Africans who have become, are becoming, and will be likely to become, partially or wholly detribalized, stabilized and urbanized.<sup>84</sup>

The report on 'Detribalisation', authored by a Tanganyikan Provincial Commissioner,

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*East Africa Vol. III* (Oxford, 1976), p.555.

<sup>82</sup> PC's Conference (June 1955) Minutes, p.25, in the East Africana collection of the University of Dar es Salaam.

<sup>83</sup> Minutes of meeting of Committee on African Detribalisation, (December?) 1956, TNA/225/PA.8/06A.

<sup>84</sup> Molohan, *Detribalisation*, para. 7.

M.J.B. Molohan, which resulted from these investigations, took its place alongside the Kenyan Carpenter Report and the EARC chapter on urban development as another influential contribution towards the revision of colonial urban policy which occurred in the final decade of colonial rule in East and Central Africa. Molohan addressed himself 'entirely to the problem of finding the most effective means whereby these [urbanised and/or detribalised] persons can be assisted to settling down peacefully and contentedly in their new environments and becoming good citizens'. He reduced the problem to two main parts: 'the establishment of an efficient system of administration in which the people concerned share and secondly the provision of greatly increased social and cultural amenities for these new communities.'<sup>85</sup> Addressing the problems of urban administration first, he observed that Dar es Salaam had always been under-administered and recommended that the African population 'required a higher degree of closer administration.'<sup>86</sup> In addition, he counselled for a reinvigoration of urban local government. There was, according to the report, 'a very great need to make the inhabitants of the [African] areas take a greater interest in the administration of their own units and the management of their own affairs and so become civic conscious.'<sup>87</sup> The introduction of local elections for Ward Councils<sup>88</sup>, along with the Councils' acquisition of executive and financial responsibilities, would, it was suggested, encourage the formation of this civic consciousness. This would be augmented by making each of Dar es Salaam's five wards 'a self-contained unit with its own council, court and hakim<sup>89</sup>, dispensary or clinic, schools, shops, market, pombe market, assembly hall, cinema, recreation and playing fields, post office, public telephone, bus service, etc.' 'By providing such facilities', Molohan concluded, 'the inhabitants will begin to feel that they are part of a single community with a common interest.'<sup>90</sup> The wards would also become 'the natural base[s] for the maintenance of law and order'; each having its own police station, and the formation of 'special constabulary' units 'should be encouraged in order to impress upon the inhabitants their duty and responsibility for aiding the enforcement of the law.'<sup>91</sup> With regard to housing, Molohan felt that greater emphasis should be placed

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., p.2.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., para. 70.

<sup>88</sup> Up to June 1957 unofficial representatives on the Ward Councils were selected at open meetings by residents of each sub-ward.

<sup>89</sup> Magistrate.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., para. 70.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., para. 80.

on African construction and ownership of houses on serviced plots, rather than the previous policy of governmental construction of housing built for leasing on unserviced estates to meet what had been up till recently a shortage of African accommodation. 'If we are to encourage the formation of a stable and contented urban middle class African populace,' he observed, 'house ownership must be encouraged in every way, together with security of tenure.'<sup>92</sup> With this in mind greater use of the 'African Urban Housing Loan Fund' was encouraged as was the establishment of a tenant-purchase scheme.

Molohan also addressed what many officials felt to be the most pressing problem; that of the drift of population from the country areas to the towns. Whilst he acknowledged the impracticality of establishing some form of pass system to control rural-urban migration, he nevertheless counselled -contrary to the recommendations contained in the EARC report- measures aimed at reducing this drift. Above all, he deemed it 'essential to strengthen the administrative powers for getting rid of drones and spivs, which are contained in the Townships (Removal of Undesirable Persons) Ordinance.'<sup>93</sup> By the mid-1950s use of this ordinance had come to be the principal means of attempting to limit the urban population.

On the question of labour, Molohan made a number of proposals which modestly advanced what he acknowledged as the 'accepted policy of encouraging the stabilisation of the working population.'<sup>94</sup> The regulation of casual employment was recommended which, in the absence of 'any effective scheme to control entry into and residence in the town', was felt might be of value as 'employers would be forced progressively to rely on a more permanent labour force.'<sup>95</sup> It was advised that a casual labour registration scheme recently established in Mombasa should be examined with a view to implementing a similar system in Tanganyika. Second, measures to encourage greater employment of women in domestic service should be encouraged. Not only would this free 'able-bodied men in this unproductive sphere of employment for which women are far better suited and equipped'<sup>96</sup>, but it would also increase the earning power of urban families, better equipping them for the expense of town life. Third, action needed to be taken against the

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid., para. 112.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., para. 95.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., para. 156.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., para. 102.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., para. 103.

employment of children in the town, which was common, chiefly taking place in domestic service. Whilst child labour had been acknowledged as having a depressive effect on wages since the late 1930s, administrators had yet to come up with adequate controls over the phenomenon. Molohan counselled the strengthening of the Employment Ordinance along with an increase in the inspectorate staff of the labour department. He also hoped 'that Ward Councils when revived and properly established will take an interest in this matter and enlist public opinion in their support.'<sup>97</sup> Finally, employers were encouraged to play a greater role in meeting the social needs of their employees including providing housing and other amenities and by establishing provident fund schemes for as many of their employers as possible, although they were not to be made legally responsible to do so.<sup>98</sup> Meanwhile, the introduction of a statutory minimum wage in 1957 –before Molohan had submitted his report- along with the ongoing process of industrial mechanisation and 'the gradual accretion of settled workers', was having the effect of encouraging the transition from a casual, migrant labour force to one which was better paid and more permanent.<sup>99</sup>

### **The Ndola Conference**

In late 1956, whilst Molohan's report was still under preparation, the Tanganyikan Government were informed of a Colonial Office proposal for a conference to be held on urban problems in East and Central Africa, to which representatives from each of the British territories' administrative and social services staff should attend.<sup>100</sup> Whilst it appeared that the policy of encouraging more permanent African urban settlement had been endorsed by the Colonial Office,<sup>101</sup> officials in London clearly felt there was still much left to discuss regarding the implementation of such a policy. The conclusions eventually arrived at by conference participants were in the event modest and cautious; a reflection perhaps, of the widely differing circumstances to be found in each of the participating territories. It was observed that the 'division of labour', a process which was

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid., para. 104.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., paras. 106 & 156.

<sup>99</sup> Iliffe, *Modern History*, p.541.

<sup>100</sup> Gorrell-Barnes to Gov. Twining, 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1956, TNA/225/UW80.131/Vol. 1.

<sup>101</sup> According to an undated (c.1956) Proposal for a Professional Conference on Urban Problems in East and Central Africa in PRO/CO/955/40 it was 'assumed that policy in all territories is now directed towards the growth of a permanent African population in the towns.'

held to be accelerating in the region, should be encouraged. This was important both for reasons of industrial efficiency, and from the point of view of establishing a more affluent –and ‘progressive’- (rural) agricultural sector in which increasingly cash crops were being produced on land held under individual tenure. An ‘essential part of this process [was] the stabilisation of some Africans as town-dwellers.’<sup>102</sup> On the other hand, it was considered wise that not all African workers’ links with their rural homes should be severed. The colonial state could not afford to provide for old people or those made redundant in the event of recession. Better to maintain a proportion of migrant labour and for some of the Africans who spent their working lives in towns to be encouraged to retire to the countryside. Nevertheless, the conference concluded that

the gradual move towards a greater division of labour, and as part of that process the stabilisation of increasing numbers of Africans in towns, is an essential condition of the advance of Africans... Consequently we consider that it is a process which should be carefully encouraged and we believe that it is a movement which in any case will gradually take place.<sup>103</sup>

At the same time it was acknowledged that conditions in the various territories ‘differ considerably and the pace at which this aim of policy can be achieved may equally differ from territory to territory.’<sup>104</sup>

A number of stratagems to produce an environment conducive to stabilisation were advanced by the conference. First, for the stated purpose of building integrated urban communities it was considered ‘highly desirable that Africans living in towns should have their wives and families with them.’<sup>105</sup> To this end the conference advised that ‘the needs of a married man rather than the individual should be progressively taken into account in determining wages.’<sup>106</sup> Second, home ownership was identified, as it had been by Molohan, as making a valuable contribution to the stabilisation of urban populations. A number of suggestions were made to encourage African ownership of ‘sufficient accommodation to enable a family to live in conditions of decency’<sup>107</sup> including construction of permanent housing for tenant purchase either by Central Government or Local Authorities, the provision of demarcated and serviced plots, and the provision of

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<sup>102</sup> ‘Ndola Report’, p.5, TNA/UW80.131/Vol.1.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., p.6-7.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., p.7.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., p.27.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., p.29.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., p.15.

loans by public authorities or by private lenders such as Building Societies. Third, the question of the social security of urbanised Africans was addressed. Whilst the past importance of the reciprocal links between rural and urban dwellers was acknowledged, the observation was made that:

Th[e] partial operation of tribal social security is apt however to become increasingly disadvantageous to both parties. The obligations of the extended family, in so far as they are fulfilled by the town dweller and wage earner, become a drag upon him... At the same time the fulfilment of customary obligations becomes more and more of a burden upon the rural community to which a town dweller returns...<sup>108</sup>

Governments were advised to conduct investigations into social security problems with a view to establishing schemes operated by either local or central government. The extension of provident funds and pension schemes organised by public authorities and private employers was also recommended.

In the final section of the conference report the 'control over movements of Africans to, within, and out of urban areas' is discussed. At the outset the consequences of a policy of urban stabilisation for such movement is identified:

Possibility of gainful employment and the amenities of towns are liable to act as a magnet to rural populations, and in particular to the young men from the villages. There is, therefore, a tendency for more people to drift to the towns than the towns can readily absorb; and the surplus is apt to become a danger to law and order and/or a social security problem.<sup>109</sup>

It was recognised that the long-term solution to this problem was the improvement of economic conditions in the rural areas. In the meantime, administrators would have to make do with the piecemeal –and largely ineffective– measures already in place in the various territories. Any concerted attempt to control movement by central or local government would involve the introduction of an effective system of identification which would require 'fingerprinting and the maintenance of a central registry' and would be politically unacceptable.<sup>110</sup> With regard to removing those unwanted immigrants who had reached the towns it was concluded that:

Where there is a lack of balance between urban and rural economies or where there is no system of social security operative in the towns, we consider that there should be provision for sending back to their last place of permanent residence unemployed or underemployed

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid., p.31.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., p.63.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., p.66.

persons who are not permanently urbanised and who cannot reasonably be expected to secure employment in the immediate future.<sup>111</sup>

Those individuals who failed to find a niche in the formal urban economy had no place in colonial towns. As was also the case with both the EARC report and Molohan's *Detribalisation*, there was no acknowledgment of the role that informal economic activities could play in providing a livelihood to the growing number of town-dwellers. Although urban social surveys, such as Leslie's in Dar es Salaam, had brought to light the existence of a flourishing informal sector, to urban administrators this represented a loss of control over the urban arena, and not the reassertion of government influence over the course of urban development which they were attempting to achieve.

The recommendations made by conference participants were broadly in line with the existing policy of the Tanganyikan Government.<sup>112</sup> The one area with which issue was taken was the wisdom of establishing any state-administered social security scheme. Tanganyikan officials displayed a distinct reluctance to assume the burden of social insurance. As Gower, the Governor's Deputy, pointed out: 'The underlying philosophy, that social security is not the responsibility of the individual or of his family, is alien to Africa.'<sup>113</sup> Notwithstanding this minor difference, the remainder of the conference recommendations were endorsed in the despatch. Indeed Gower indicated the Tanganyikan government's prior implementation of many of the proposals made by officials at Ndola. He could thus boast of the high proportion of African-owned houses in Dar es Salaam and of the 'comprehensive wage' received by the majority of urban workers.<sup>114</sup> The unanimity displayed between the authors of the conference report and Tanganyikan officials was hardly surprising. By 1958 most of the arguments raised at Ndola had been well rehearsed and a consensus had emerged amongst those responsible for the administration of urban areas throughout British East and Central Africa. The Ndola conference simply served to strengthen this consensus whilst at the same time giving an opportunity to discuss the ways and means of achieving the fundamental objectives of late colonial urban policy.

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid., p.69.

<sup>112</sup> R.H. Gower to Secretary of State for the Colonies, 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1959, PRO/CO/955/83.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.



## Conclusion

Throughout the British colonial period officials in Tanganyika retained, with regard to the 'native' population, a distinctly anti-urban outlook. This anti-urbanism was most marked in the first twenty years of British rule. At this time such attitudes were the logical corollary of a policy of indirect administration. With the post-war shift to a local government strategy, and the emergence of a more developmental agenda, this anti-urbanism was tempered and the stabilisation of an urban African workforce was actually encouraged. The urban arena was now acknowledged to be the ideal location to mould a new non-tribal (not 'detrified') African, who had internalised Western attitudes to work, and whose tribal values had been replaced by civic ones. However, the state of the colonial economy restricted the number of Africans who would form the new urban communities. Urbanisation amongst the remainder of the African population continued to be a cause for concern. Existing outside the planned residential estates and employment in the formal sector, this African 'residuum' was as much as ever a cause for concern. The colonial response was to attempt to restrict its expansion. At the same time as the African urban presence was gradually accepted, a stricter definition of what constituted a 'legitimate' town-dweller was inserted in successive versions of the Townships (Removal of Undesirable Natives/Persons) Ordinance. In 1944, in order to have a right to urban residence you had to have paid poll tax in a town the previous year. A decade later this was amended to having lived in a town for eighteen months out of the past three years. In 1958 qualification was extended to four out of the past five years, making it even more difficult to be legally classed a townsman or woman. Throughout the period the colonial urban vision was always an exclusive one. What a policy of stabilisation required was

people with regular employment who can settle down to a stable life and by being good citizens can make their contribution to the high reputation that the capital of Tanganyika should enjoy.<sup>115</sup>

Tellingly, the colonial period produced (or imported) a rich vocabulary to describe those Africans who, failing to conform to this description, were held to have no place in the urban areas. In addition to *wahuni*, loafers, idlers, town roughs, waifs, strays, spivs, drones, rogues, vagabonds, destitutes, paupers, hooligans, guttersnipes and semi-occupied natives were all deemed 'undesirable persons' in Dar es Salaam and other Tanganyikan

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<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

towns. And they remained so throughout the period under consideration. Whilst the 1950s was a time when the respectable Africans' place in the colonial urban vision was at last confirmed, it was also a time when more concerted action was simultaneously taking place against the growing numbers of Africans who did not fit this vision. In their forty years in Tanganyika the British colonial rulers had helped create a society in which the lure of the towns grew ever stronger. They had also been engaged in a constant struggle against the consequences of this attraction.

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<sup>115</sup> Gov. Twining's speech at the opening of Ilala Boma, 20<sup>th</sup> May 1958, TNA/540/27/11/A.

## **Part Two**

### **Crime and colonial order**

Tanganyika is rapidly developing all the Social Problems of civilised countries.

Rev. R.M. Gibbons, Report on the Question of Imprisonment in Tanganyika (1932) App.C.

## Chapter Three

### Crime in colonial Dar es Salaam

#### Legitimate or illegitimate lawlessness? - Defining crime in Dar es Salaam

There is no permanent criminal class at war with the peace of the community but rather a series of separate acts by individuals, whose need or conscience is for the moment in conflict with the provisions of the law.<sup>1</sup>

The British administration presided over a substantial increase in recorded criminality in Tanganyika. To what extent does this indicate a breakdown of morality as defined by the coloniser as opposed to a more general degeneration of behaviour in the terms of the majority African population? Historians of crime in the western world have often distinguished between illegal actions that were universally condemned by the society in which they were committed, and those which were considered legitimate acts by significant sections of that society. Emsley, for example, in his survey of crime in England between 1750-1900, draws attention to the difference between 'real' (or 'anti-social') crime and 'social' crime.<sup>2</sup> In eighteenth and nineteenth century England some laws which appeared to have protected the interests of a particular class, were not necessarily accepted by those they discriminated against, who in breaking them felt no sense of wrongdoing. Such offences –the classic example of which is that of poaching– have been characterised as social crime.<sup>3</sup> 'Real' crime, on the other hand, which might include violent crimes or crimes against property motivated by acquisitiveness rather than need, was more roundly condemned by all sections of society.<sup>4</sup> The distinction between real and social crime has perhaps even greater pertinence in a colonial context. In Dar es

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<sup>1</sup> 'Some observations on the treatment of the offender against the law' [in Tanganyika] by Alexander Paterson (1939), p.1, TNA/27062.

<sup>2</sup> Emsley, *Crime*, p.2. See also John G. Rule, 'Social crime in the rural south in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries', *Southern History*, 1 (1979), pp.135-53; and George Rude, *Criminal and Victim: Crime and society in early 19<sup>th</sup> c. England*, (Oxford, 1985), p.78. Rude specifies a third category of crime, 'survival' crime, which was committed out of dire necessity.

<sup>3</sup> Another form of social crime according to Rule and Rude was protest crime, which involved protest made in breach of the law.

<sup>4</sup> Emsley cautions that the distinction between social and real crime be made with care, as these categories are often blurred.

Salaam, and elsewhere in the European empires, laws -often, but not always, the product of distinctive western legal and cultural traditions- were framed by outsiders and imposed upon colonised subjects, their legitimacy in some cases resting solely on the threat of force. In urban centres in particular, colonial subjects were subject to local laws imported from European towns and cities; ones originally designed to impose municipal order amongst European urban communities, communities which were a part of the industrialised and more affluent societies of the west. In the attempt to assert a colonial order customary pursuits of local African populations were frequently criminalised; as were many subsistence activities adopted by Africans in the often harsh urban environment. In Dar es Salaam, for example, strict liquor laws prohibited the customary usage of alcohol, and municipal regulations severely restricted the number of people engaging in petty trade. Amongst the African population such legal restrictions commanded little or no acceptance. Indeed, even those which one may characterise as illegitimate, such as the theft of property, may not have been universally considered so amongst sections of the population who were perplexed –and perhaps aggravated- by the unequal distribution of resources in colonial society.<sup>5</sup>

Some officials acknowledged the problem. In 1932 one senior administrator stressed that ‘it must be remembered that there is no real moral turpitude or real criminality involved in breach of the hundred and one rules, regulations, bye-laws etc.’<sup>6</sup> Alexander Patterson, who as Commissioner for Prisons in England and Wales visited East Africa in 1939, concurred with this point of view. He considered it was

inevitable that crime and conscience should not coincide, when a Penal Code that is founded on a European ethic is imposed upon an African people, whose ideas of right and wrong are so completely different. Many acts deemed by the law to be the most heinous crimes are committed from a high sense of duty. Many more little evasions are construed by the law to be petty offences, though the African can see no harm in them.<sup>7</sup>

Towards the end of the colonial period, Leslie observed the frustrations arising from certain municipal regulations:

All the restrictions which seem to be aimed at preventing a man from making a few pence –no hawking without a licence, no begging, no three card-trick stands- are made by these

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<sup>5</sup> Leslie, *Survey*, p.106.

<sup>6</sup> Sec. min., 22<sup>nd</sup> September 1932, TNA/21041.

<sup>7</sup> ‘Report on a visit to the Prisons of Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika, Zanzibar, Aden and Somaliland’, 1939, [hereafter: Paterson, ‘Report’], p.1, in TNA/27062

people [Europeans] who combine the three attributes of being rich, alien and in authority, all three sitting ducks for the frustrated, the discontented, the simple and bewildered.<sup>8</sup>

In his 1957 survey of the town, Leslie detected widespread indifference towards crime in general amongst Dar es Salaam's African inhabitants. In part he ascribed this to a general neglect of community interest. '[T]he instinct to help the victim [of a crime] and the forces of law and order', he observed, 'is simply not there.'<sup>9</sup> The mutual communal responsibilities which characterised village life, according to Leslie, were lost on the move to town. In addition to the relative absence of notions of the public good, though, he also found that moral sanctions against criminal behaviour were also not particularly strong. 'The pilferer, the thief, the embezzler,' wrote Leslie, 'are in the eyes of many—including themselves- hardly criminals but are 'winning' something which nobody will miss, and to which they are in any case in some way entitled.'<sup>10</sup> There is evidence which supports Leslie's conclusions. Throughout the colonial period officials bemoaned the lack of co-operation given to the police by the African public. Whether this can best be explained by the loss of communal responsibility, however, is another matter. Another theory, advanced at a meeting to discuss the theft of crops in 1941, is perhaps more convincing:

The African... has in his own customs the principle of restitution and reparation for theft or damage as fundamental, but it is neglected in British practise and as a result the African population will not give that co-operation to the police that is essential if law and order are to be secured.<sup>11</sup>

Also, the apparent indifference of the African population to the maintenance of order could more plausibly be attributed to a lack of commitment to colonial order, not order *per se*. Indeed, the harsh and instant justice which could be meted out by Africans to criminals caught in the act was evidence of a dramatic *lack* of indifference.

In observing the relative tolerance of much criminal behaviour Leslie was on firmer ground. The ill-distributed wealth of colonial society could serve to endorse some unilateral redistribution; particularly at times of need. Thus Rajabu bin Alfani, complaining of low rates of pay in a letter to *Kwetu*, observed that '[m]any Africans are enduring without food for four or more days [per month], but for others who are not able

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<sup>8</sup> Leslie, *Survey*, p.106.

<sup>9</sup> Leslie, *Survey*, p.242.

<sup>10</sup> Leslie, *Survey*, p.109.

<sup>11</sup> TS, 4<sup>th</sup> July 1941, p.15.

to endure it is necessary to turn to crime.'<sup>12</sup> Kondo bin Waziri, after being caught stealing a bicycle in 1942, endeavoured to justify a criminal career which up to then had stretched to six convictions for property offences over a twelve year period. He sought, remarked the presiding judge in his summary,

to excuse his life of crime by putting the blame for it on other people. He is compelled to steal for a livelihood, he says, because the police do not find him work when he is released from prison. This particular theft, he alleges, was forced upon him by the Native authorities who were pressing him to pay his tax. Even when he has sought to make a living by honest toil in the fields the bush pigs have rendered his efforts nugatory by stealing his crops by night, thus proving the truth of the old saying that there is no honour among thieves.<sup>13</sup>

According to Leslie the prevalence of thefts by servants occurred partly as a result of a kind of redistributive impulse:

the servants in the houses, working for a pittance, have to handle meat and fish and butter and drink and do without themselves; their employers have so many sheets and towels and shirts that they have to be counted, yet if one is missing there is the devil to pay: why cannot there be more of a share out? Why does one have to take one's cut out of food by stealth instead of by right?<sup>14</sup>

Corresponding with this general indifference towards crime, Leslie also observed that no real stigma seemed to attach itself to those who had been convicted of crimes and/or imprisoned.<sup>15</sup>

Leslie's observations no doubt carry some weight. However, African attitudes towards crime in the capital were not undifferentiated. Most Africans in Dar es Salaam, sharing similar backgrounds and the same impecunious conditions of existence as offenders (the bulk of whom were opportunists and not recidivists), would probably not condemn the petty offences -such as shoplifting or theft from the workplace- which were the commonest form of property crime in the town, nor would they condemn 'social' crimes such as gambling, hawking or mendicancy. However, also present in Dar es Salaam were a minority of Africans who, through education, employment or position, enjoyed a somewhat better standard of living than the majority of their compatriots. It seems that this petty bourgeoisie actually shared some of the anxieties about African criminality felt by Europeans and Asians. Although a minority, it was this group who were best placed to

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<sup>12</sup> *Kiwetu* No. 5, 26<sup>th</sup> March 1942, p.4. (Original in Swahili).

<sup>13</sup> *TS*, 28<sup>th</sup> August 1942, p.9.

<sup>14</sup> Leslie, *Survey*, p.106.

<sup>15</sup> Leslie, *Survey*, p.239; see also Paterson, Report.

articulate their concerns and to lobby the colonial administration for protection. So Erica Fiah, proprietor of the African newspaper, *Kwetu*, in complaining of an increase in urban crime in 1940, advocated similar measures to his European counterparts:

For Government to be allowing the jobless to stay in the town is very bad indeed; perhaps the Government has a fondness for these destitutes. People have been vulnerable to having all their things stolen, to having their possessions plucked from them, over a period of many years. Now I bring to the attention of Government and the District and Municipal administrations the policy of removing thieves from the town; unemployed persons should be forced out and be made to cultivate; homeowners should compile lists of the names of their tenants in work and send them to the administration....<sup>16</sup>

M.F. Kassam, in a letter to *Kwetu* two years later, complained of *wahuni* collecting together and harassing women, throwing stones at *askaris* and buildings, gambling and stealing. For him too the solution was forced removal. 'Why', he asked,

are those elders appointed by the DC not looking out for these things which contribute to disorderliness in town. ... We ask that the DC should remove this trouble from the town so that it should be cleansed.<sup>17</sup>

A few years later, in a letter to the Chief Secretary, Magulele Mkonimwe ascribed a –supposed- increase in criminality to the laxity of the British penal regime, which, he held, should treat offenders more harshly, thus echoing the complaints of European and Asian settlers:

Theft is now about 75%. In 1889 it was 0.5% because theft was a thing of disgrace; thieves were killed or made slaves or burnt. In 1909 it was 1%. When a person was found stealing he was given 15 strokes and one month's imprisonment and after the expiry of the one month he was given some 15 strokes more then was discharged. In 1913 theft was 0.75% because people were afraid. In 1921 it was 10% because if a person was found stealing he was left unpunished. In 1928 it was 35% because a person without clothes was supplied with some and when in prison he got sufficient food than when he was free.

In 1935 a thief sometimes won the case if he were cleverer than the owner. In 1944 it was 44%; *Shamba* people do not sleep because they are afraid of thieves; in the town windows are being forced broken. The thieves are very proud and they praise the British Empire. They have a motto as, 'Provided you are clever enough to win in a case you will never work.' We ask that government should make a punishment for thieves more severer than the other cases because about 25% of people in the town have no work but they eat sufficiently more than those who are working.

We ask that government remove theft just like the Congo Belgian government so that we live comfortably.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> *Kwetu*, No.4, 12<sup>th</sup> March 1940, p.1 (original in Swahili).

<sup>17</sup> *Kwetu*, No.1, 13<sup>th</sup> February 1942 (original in Swahili).

<sup>18</sup> M. Mkonimwe to CS, undated (1944/45?), TNA/10849.



This was not an isolated point of view. In a letter to the *Tanganyika Standard* eight years later, Erica Fiah reiterated Mgonimwe's concerns:

We, the Africans cannot be good people unless we are taught by punishment of beating. Even at our homes, our *totos*, if not nursed in that way, become useless people, lazy and vagabond, the way to become thieves because they don't want to work.

...When the territory was under the Germans, nobody could attempt to steal for being afraid of the punishments. They were given *kibokos* every Saturday and all of them chained together day or night. No clothes were issued to them and they could not shave until the day of their release.

To save this Africa from such unrest of stealing, the system of the Germans should be brought into being. Such action will make us to give up with the laziness of not willing to work, their work is to steal to enable them to get what they want for their living.<sup>19</sup>

In another letter to the *Standard* five years later, Lawi Kardi, a resident of Ilala, also advocated the use of corporal punishment as a deterrent. 'Noone will steal for being afraid of the *kiboko*', he claimed, comparing Tanganyika unfavourably with the Congo and Portuguese East Africa, where, thanks to the use of the whip, 'one can leave a bike on the road unlocked'.<sup>20</sup>

It is clear from these surviving letters that the denunciation of unoccupied Africans on the streets of Dar es Salaam was by no means confined to Europeans and Indians. The presence of unpropertied *wahuni* not only caused a propertied (African) elite anxiety over the vulnerability of their possessions – '[i]f an African who obtains his living by hard working, and his properties are stolen, he prefers to die rather than to live', wrote Fiah<sup>21</sup> – but their unruly behaviour was also an affront to the elite sensibility – so Kassam asked for the town to be 'cleansed'. The social distance between these two groups was great. According to Norman Pearson, who visited Tanganyika as a Trade Unions advisor in the late 1940s, 'educated Africans tend to hold themselves aloof from the common people in the towns who, it must be admitted, include many undesirable elements.' 'It has been said,' he continued, 'with a certain amount of justice, that there is a greater gulf between the well-educated and the uneducated African, than there is between the latter and some Europeans.'<sup>22</sup> Those Africans who formed the educated elite most commonly originated from districts far from the capital, and were, in contrast to the majority Muslim

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<sup>19</sup> *TS*, 28<sup>th</sup> June 1952.

<sup>20</sup> *TS*, 18<sup>th</sup> June 1957, p.4.

<sup>21</sup> *TS*, 28<sup>th</sup> June 1952.

<sup>22</sup> Norman Pearson, 'Trade Unionist on Safari', [hereafter: Pearson, 'Safari'], p.225, RH/Mss.Afr.s.394.

population, often practising Christians.<sup>23</sup> Muslim members of the elite also often came from dissimilar backgrounds to most other Africans.<sup>24</sup> By contrast the majority of the urban African population –including those jobless individuals labelled *wahuni*– were from the –overwhelmingly Muslim– coastal areas (and their hinterland) close to Dar es Salaam.<sup>25</sup> In addition to these cultural and religious factors dividing the ‘masses’ from the elite, economic, occupational and even generational differences also served to separate them. Western education, relative affluence, and the seniority of age gave members of the elite the confidence to condemn the behaviour of their less respectable brethren; however, they also served to promote elite anxiety about those townsmen who shared none of these privileges and were disdainful of their supposed betters.

Criminality was a contested notion amongst Dar es Salaam’s various strata. Colonial definitions of crime were broad, their object being an orderly and strictly regulated urban environment. Attempts to criminalise particular activities, however, were resisted by Africans. Petty economic activities might have been proscribed by colonial law, but they also provided incomes and services to the African population. In an urban context in which widespread poverty existed beside prosperity even certain property crimes appear to have been condoned by many Africans. Though not by all. Alongside the breach between the colonised and the coloniser, African attitudes towards crime were also differentiated along class lines.

### **The extent of crime in Dar es Salaam**

In addition to those problems relating to definitions of criminality, a second set of problems emerging from any discussion of crime relate to the nature of the historical data. The incidence of crime in Dar es Salaam appears to have risen precipitously in the

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<sup>23</sup> To take some examples from Iliffe: Samwil Chiponde, who came to Dar es Salaam after WWI and became a High Court interpreter, was a product of the UMCA school at Kiungani, Zanzibar; Benedict Madalito, a Makua from Southern Tanganyika, who was also educated in Zanzibar, was a senior African clerk in the Dar es Salaam district office; other African civil servants, such as Edwin Brenn and Rawson Watts were products of the CMS school at Mombasa. Iliffe, *Modern History*, 1979, p.266. Meanwhile Erica Fiala, erstwhile medical clerk, shopkeeper, activist and newspaper proprietor had come to Tanganyika from Uganda during WWI.

<sup>24</sup> Men like Kleist Sykes, who was born to a Shangaan father and Nyaturu mother in Tanga Province. Buruku, For further background on the Muslim ‘elite’ see Said, *Abduhwahid Sykes*.

<sup>25</sup> In 1956 Zaramo, Rufiji, Luguru, Ndengereko and Ngindo– constituted 62% of the total urban population.

period of the British mandate. Both the statistical record and impressionistic evidence support this view. It is necessary to stress caution about these sources, however.<sup>26</sup> Any rise in crime rates to be detected in surviving police, court or prison records may be as much a reflection of increased efficiency in policing, the decision to enforce previously neglected laws, or a change in sentencing policy, as it is of rising criminality amongst the general populace.<sup>27</sup> In the case of Dar es Salaam, low crime figures in the early colonial period are likely to have had at least something to do with the negligible police presence in the town in the inter-war period. Similarly, the rapid escalation of crime rates after WWII was almost certainly partly related to the enhanced capacity of the police to detect misdemeanours and to enforce the law. They may have also reflected the greater likelihood for crimes to be reported as a result of increasing public confidence in the ability of the police to apprehend and prosecute offenders. Both before and after WWII, however, it is likely that a large number of offences remained unreported. In a study of crime amongst low income residents of Kampala shortly after independence it was found that 41 per cent of those who had been the victim of a theft had not reported the offence to the police.<sup>28</sup> Africans in colonial Dar es Salaam were probably even less inclined to report crimes to a policing body whom many regarded as more of an occupying force than a neutral keeper of the peace.<sup>29</sup> The 'dark figure' –as historians of crime in the western world have coined 'the number of offences committed of which there is no record because no one bothered to, wished to, or was able to report a particular offence'<sup>30</sup>– casts a considerable –though unquantifiable– shadow over the recorded crime statistics in colonial Tanganyika, as elsewhere.

In assessing rates of criminality it is also important to relate surviving crime statistics alongside those recording the growth of the urban population. The escalation in recorded offences which occurred in Dar es Salaam give the impression of an urban environment in which crime became increasingly prevalent. It is by no means clear that this was the case. For example, if we take the number of cases dealt with in Dar es Salaam's local

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<sup>26</sup> For a useful discussion of interpreting crime-related data see Emsley, *Crime*, pp.1-55.

<sup>27</sup> For discussion of such factors in operation in colonial Kenya see chapters by Anderson and Willis in David Anderson, and David Killingray, *Policing the Empire: Government, authority and control, 1830-1940*, (Manchester, 1991).

<sup>28</sup> M.B. Clinard, & D.J. Abbott, *Crime in developing countries*, (New York, 1973), p.24.

<sup>29</sup> Clinard and Abbott make the observation that if victims of crime 'have been harassed about licence or tax regulations, or treated in an overbearing manner, many cases of crime will not be reported at all.' Ibid., p.24.

<sup>30</sup> Emsley, *Crime*, p.24.

courts in 1950 and 1957, we find that the incidence of criminality actually appears to have decreased, with one case for every 25 urban inhabitants in 1950 compared to one for every 38 in 1957. With the capital increasing at the rate it did from c.1939 urban crime rates inevitably rose. Commonly expressed anxieties about crime probably reflected this increased incidence rather than a growing tendency to criminality.

A further problem with official crime records is that in Dar es Salaam the law was imposed differentially. Offences which the police decided to prosecute could vary over time. The production and consumption of *tembo* (palm wine), for example, was legally proscribed throughout the inter-war period. The official response to such activity, however, was uneven, varying between tolerance and sporadic attempts at eradication. Such unevenness in the application of the law was most marked in the case of the sex trade. Whilst prostitution was declared illegal by the colonial administration, the laws that prohibited it were not implemented –systematically, at least- against Dar es Salaam's growing community of prostitutes. At one point, in fact, in the late 1920s, an attempt was made by the Township Authority to license brothels and to provide for the medical inspection of prostitutes. It was opposed by central government, however.<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless prostitution was, in spite of the clauses which outlawed such activity in both the town rules and the penal code, broadly tolerated throughout the period of the British mandate. That prostitutes in Dar es Salaam did not receive the treatment meted out to comparable offenders against the law, such as beggars or street traders, is perhaps surprising. Officials disapproved of it on a number of grounds: the areas in which it was practised were often a haven for the town's more unruly elements;<sup>32</sup> the steady flow<sup>33</sup> of customers to the red light districts hindered the control of these areas; it offered the opportunity to amass wealth beyond the supervision of the state; and finally there was the straightforward moral objection to the sale of sex to earn a living. In spite of all of these objections, however, prostitution was tolerated by colonial officials. This policy was partly based on expediency; in a town full of single men the contribution of these women to urban stability did not go unrecognised. '[A]ny attempt at repression of prostitution in Dar es Salaam by means of legal sanctions or administrative action', wrote the Municipal Secretary in 1944,

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<sup>31</sup> Mbilinyi, "Unforgettable business", p.116.

<sup>32</sup> See for example *TH*, 23rd February 1935, p.6.

<sup>33</sup> In Kisumu, according to *TH* (23rd February 1935, p.6), 'prostitutes are allowed to carry on their profession

is to be strongly condemned *unless* the authorities are prepared to provide social alternatives that will attract the young male. Personally, I do not think that the Authorities can provide these alternatives – after all the biological urge is not lightly repressed without grave danger.<sup>34</sup>

Equally significant though, was the fact that the urban administration was never in position to eliminate prostitution in the town, even if it *had* desired to do so. When, after the outbreak of an epidemic of venereal diseases during the Second World War, an attempt *was* made to curtail the trade ‘all attempts to stop it proved futile.’<sup>35</sup> At no time did Dar es Salaam’s prostitutes become the victims of colonial campaigns against urban undesirables. As a result, the sale of sex is one criminal activity the extent of which is poorly reflected in police and judicial records. For other illegal activities too, the uneven application of the law complicates the interpretation of such records.

Other, more impressionistic sources, including newspapers and official correspondence, are also unreliable. Heightened public perceptions of particular crimes, or of crime waves, can in the end almost prove self-fulfilling.<sup>36</sup> Human anxiety, meanwhile, often leads to exaggerated fears about the prevalence of criminality, especially violence-related crimes. This in part helps to explain the impression of rampant lawlessness in Uhindi given by Dar es Salaam’s Indian-owned newspapers. Claims that a ‘native raj’ operated in Zone II<sup>37</sup> should be treated with some scepticism. Whilst police complacency about conditions in the Indian (and African) quarters in the 1930s was not justified, neither was the situation quite as extreme as portrayed in numerous overwrought editorials in the Indian press. Similarly, the settler press reflected distorted perceptions of the prevalence of crime on the part of the European community, whose anxieties were perhaps magnified by a consciousness of being heavily outnumbered in the Tanganyikan capital by ‘native’ subjects. Official observations on the incidence of crime in Dar es Salaam are also perhaps more unreliable than opinions offered on other aspects of town life. The degree of lawlessness will always, to some extent at least, depend upon the eye of the beholder. Meanwhile, the same may be said of oral sources on the colonial period. Informants interviewed about colonial Dar es Salaam, from all races

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day and night.’

<sup>34</sup> MS to CS, 16<sup>th</sup> December 1944, TNA/20887/Vol.II.

<sup>35</sup> Westcott, “Impact”, p.291.

<sup>36</sup> See Emsley, *Crime*, p.26.

<sup>37</sup> *TH*, 6<sup>th</sup> April 1935, p.4.

and backgrounds (but particularly African informants), tend to recollect a town in which crime was almost absent. Such a view does not chime with the picture which emerges from surviving records – even allowing for the most exaggerated fears on the part of contemporary observers. This tendency to idealise the situation can perhaps best be accounted for by the post-colonial experience -for those who have remained in the town- of substantially increased lawlessness in Dar es Salaam, mixed with a degree of wistful nostalgia. Various factors then, complicate the treatment of crime as a historical subject. Having necessarily made such qualifications, however, it is nevertheless possible to venture to give some impression of the extent of crime in Dar es Salaam in the colonial period.<sup>38</sup>

The installation of the British administration had an inauspicious beginning. The final years of WWI and the immediate post-war years saw a wave of lawlessness sweeping the country in which the capital was also caught up. '[D]ue to the demobilised native follower and soldier', the District Officer reported in 1920, 'crime was a very serious matter in the town and district during the last nine months of 1919.'<sup>39</sup> The repatriation of undesirables and prosecution of offenders helped stabilise the situation in the capital. However, it was not until 1921 that the Commissioner of Police could report that 'crime within the territory for the first time since the war was brought within normal limits.'<sup>40</sup> Nevertheless, crime rates soon began to escalate once again, in Dar es Salaam especially. As the largest urban concentration, property crime was far more prevalent there than in other parts of Tanganyika. In 1921, 48 out of the 160 reported incidents of housebreaking occurred in the territorial capital.<sup>41</sup> By 1923 this total had risen to 123, and the following year Dar es Salaam accounted for 191 out of 416 in Tanganyika as a whole.<sup>42</sup> By the end of the 1920s approximately one third of all criminal cases in Tanganyika were reported in Dar es Salaam - 1,723 cases out of a total of 5,142. Over the next two years this

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<sup>38</sup> The foregoing discussion gives an account of criminal activity which is based on surviving colonial records. It shares the weaknesses of those records, which, without knowledge of how they were produced, are furthermore difficult to interpret. Nevertheless, as the main source of information about crime –however unreliable- statistics have been quoted in an attempt to convey an impression of the situation in Dar es Salaam. They should be treated as indicators of trends instead of a reliable guide to the extent of crime at any one time or in any one place.

<sup>39</sup> DAR for 1919-20, TNA/1733:1. The increased incidence of crime in the aftermath of war, when large numbers of young men return 'home', appears to have been a relatively common historical phenomenon. See Emsley, *Crime*, p.33, for the example of Britain in the aftermath of the American War of Independence.

<sup>40</sup> Police AR for 1921, p.28.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

*Table 3.1 Convictions for various crimes and offences in Subordinate Courts in Tanganyika, 1928-1941*

	1928	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934
Malicious injuries to property	33	33	37	18	53	47	47
Other offences against property	1,766	1,940	2,076	2,241	2,401	2,552	2,534
Offences against revenue laws, Municipal, Road and other laws relating to the social economy of the Territory	5,039	4,566	5,484	5,868	5,684	6,251	7,745
	1935	1936	1937	1938	1939	1940	1941
Malicious injuries to property	74	79	92	93	54	69	110
Other offences against property	2,529	2,436	2,561	2,705	3,022	3,323	3,396
Offences against revenue laws, Municipal, Road and other laws relating to the social economy of the Territory	8,005	9,013	8,946	10,357	10,874	9,835	6,774

Source: Judicial Dept. ARs

*Table 3.2 Prosecutions in Dar es Salaam Township 1931-1938*

	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938
Total no. of cases against local and special laws	1031	911	1272	1472	1174	1417	1615	2145
Offence against Township Regulations	614	399	449	591	368	505	456	433
Cases of drunkenness - Europeans								4
Cases of drunkenness - Asiatics			4	3	9	3	5	3
Cases of drunkenness - Arabs			2		3	2	2	
Cases of drunkenness - Natives	107	57	71	42	36	103	78	112
Cases of theft reported (value over Shs.100/-)	101	72	46					
Cases of theft reported (value under Shs.100/-)	342	311	198					
Cases of theft reported				281	908	1126	924	1317
Total cases in which juveniles were concerned		26	21	131	122	45	46	9

Source: TNA 18950 Vol.II.

*Table 3.3 Convictions in Dar es Salaam Township 1925-38*

	1925	1926	1927	1928	1929	1930	1931
Europeans	55	34	50	132	105	86	102
Asiatics	86	93	184	226	176	205	234
Arabs		15	27	8	10	17	20
Somalis						1	1
Aboriginal natives	1035	830	1175	992	926	1041	1180

	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938
Europeans	97	132	135	38	42	116	131
Asiatics	250	389	548	356	335	573	665
Arabs	34	35	46	64	43	57	82
Somalis	2			2	8	1	
Aboriginal natives	1107	1228	1419	1374	1328	1470	1596
Juvenile Aboriginal natives	26	19	105	108	21	40	9

Source: Memorandum on the social conditions of Dsm, 4.6.31, p.96; & information in TNA 18950 Vol. II.



proportion rose to almost 38%, with 2,217 cases being reported in Dar es Salaam in 1931.<sup>43</sup> These included 443 cases of theft (see Table 5.1). 'Few nights pass without some form of minor appropriation of property taking place in the native quarter', observed Baker in his report that year.<sup>44</sup> Also in 1931, a group of settlers, alarmed at what they perceived to be the escalation in crime, published a satirical despatch in the *Tanganyika Times* purporting to be penned by Governor Cameron:

Every care is taken to prevent them [the police] from effectively dealing with the criminal classes who now openly flout authority and it must now be obvious to everybody that the type of crime now pursued by the native inhabitants approximates more and more to eastern standards, thus vindicating my astonishing immigration policy. Bag snatching is now competing with the burglary epidemic and this Territory has now become one of the safest places in the world for a criminal fraud to be perpetrated.<sup>45</sup>

In the course of the following decade reported cases of theft jumped dramatically, reaching 1,317 in 1939. In the same period the number of Africans convicted in Dar es Salaam rose from 1,041 to 1,596. '[T]heft and all sorts of petty crimes are rampant', complained Pike in his 1939 report on African affairs in the township, 'but the wrong doers are seldom if ever caught.'<sup>46</sup> A UMCA missionary, writing in *Central Africa* the following year, bemoaned 'the prevalence of petty larceny in every quarter of the town.' 'In one month recently', he complained, 'there were 200 such convictions, and much of it goes on undetected and unpunished'.<sup>47</sup> The picture painted by the headmaster of the Government Primary School on reporting a burglary the same year was equally bleak:

It is probable that not a single day or night passes without at least one burglary in the African quarter of the town; usually there are several. Most of these are never even reported to the Police, because the victims know quite well that in present circumstances nothing can be done in the vast majority of cases.<sup>48</sup>

In the early years of WWII there was an actual reduction in crime in the capital, attributed to the absence from town of a large number of men away on service, less unemployment and the repatriation of 'undesirable sojourners'.<sup>49</sup> By the end of the war though, crime rates appeared to be escalating once again. Whilst few statistics for Dar es

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<sup>42</sup> Police AR for 1924.

<sup>43</sup> CP to CS, 11.7.32, TNA/18950/vol.1; & Police ARs for 1929-31.

<sup>44</sup> Baker, 'Social conditions', p.93.

<sup>45</sup> 'What the Gov might have said' – Published by the 'Vigilantes,' PO Box 554, Salisbury, in the *Tanganyika Times* in 1930 (cutting in RH/Mss.Afr.s.1072).

<sup>46</sup> Pike, 'Native Affairs'.

<sup>47</sup> *Central Africa* (1940), p.161.

<sup>48</sup> R.J. Harvey to Director of Education, 6<sup>th</sup> March 1940, TNA/61/207/Vol.II.

Table 3.4 Comparable table of convictions for various crimes in Tanganyika 1946-1962

	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950
Offences against the person	909	1,187	1,510	1,586	1,977
Malicious injuries against property	114	132	180	144	197
Other offences against property	5,206	6,134	6,294	7,018	8,216
Offences against revenue laws, municipal, road & other laws relating to the social economy of the Territory	6,691	9,252	10,396	12,357	14,887
Miscellaneous other offences	205	335	374	449	677

	1951	1952	1953	1954
Offences against the person	2,600	2,674	1,830	2,352
Malicious injuries against property	248	253	440	241
Other offences against property	9,248	9,258	10,317	9,561
Offences against revenue laws, municipal, road & other laws relating to the social economy of the Territory	17,225	18,840	17,178	22,041
Miscellaneous other offences	808	791	809	584

	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962
<i>Against Property:</i>								
a) Thefts, other stealings, robbery, extortion, burglary, house and store breaking, false pretences, cheating, fraud, receiving, praedial larceny and others	8,783	9,485	10,650	10,753	11,137	10,382	7,837	11,080
b) Arson	187	231	127	159	168	151	128	168
<i>Against Local Laws:</i>								
Against Traffic Ordinance, Township Ordinance, Liquor Ordinance, gambling and others	22,487	20,140	29,328	30,525	31,454	30,925	33,813	22,210
TOTAL (all crimes)	36,094	34,711	45,051	48,338	48,638	47,172	50,441	38,183

Source: Judicial Dept. ARs (Note: The method of recording crimes changed in 1955)

Salaam itself are extant, surviving records for the territory as a whole indicate a sharp rise in criminality (or at least a sharp rise in *detected* criminality). In 1939 there had been convictions in 1,618 cases of crime against property in Tanganyika. By 1946 the number of convictions for property offences had jumped by over 300% to 5,208.<sup>50</sup> In Dar es Salaam itself, the District Commissioner observed in his annual report for that year, 'burglary and petty thieving, bag-snatching and the like showed a considerable increase.'<sup>51</sup> 1,963 thefts were reported in the town in the course of the year, as compared to 1,115 in 1938.<sup>52</sup> 'Commission of crime', the Dar es Salaam Superintendent of Police informed the Municipal Secretary,

is only too prevalent at present in the native quarter: far too many thefts and burglaries occur monthly in this area mostly by night, although the individual cases may not be very serious the cumulative effect is most disturbing to the African residents.<sup>53</sup>

He reported that 'a spate of rumours of assaults and robberies [had] been so strong that native women were refusing to go out alone after dark and men took to carrying knives and sticks to protect themselves against attack.' 'It has been emphasized to me again and again', he continued, 'that the crying needs of the native area are more police and more lights, and in this opinion I heartily concur.' Crime rates continued to rise through the late 1940s. By 1950, convictions in property cases had risen over the territory as a whole by an annual average of around 750. In the first three months of that year 787 property-related offences had been dealt with by the police in Dar es Salaam division alone.<sup>54</sup> There had been at least three hundred more cases reported to the Dar es Salaam police than in the same period the previous year – 1,092 as opposed to 804 in 1949. 'Incidents after incidents happen', complained the editor of the *Tanganyika Opinion* in February. How, he asked with characteristic overstatement, 'can people tolerate any more such daily harassments when their mere stepping out of home at night is watched by hooligans and night raiders? When their lives and properties are in danger every step they go out?'<sup>55</sup>

Over the final decade of colonial rule crime rates continued to rise. 'Offences against property', noted the Commissioner of Police in his 1949 report, 'are steadily on the

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<sup>49</sup> See Police ARs for 1941(p.10) and 1942 (p.19).

<sup>50</sup> Police AR for 1939; & Judicial AR for 1946.

<sup>51</sup> Uzaramo DAR for 1946, p.8, TNA/61/504/1/46.

<sup>52</sup> Answers to D.K.Patel's questions in the Legco, December 1946, TNA/20219/Vol.II.

<sup>53</sup> SP to MS, 4<sup>th</sup> February 1946, TNA/540/27/20.

<sup>54</sup> Analysis of crime dealt with by police, 1<sup>st</sup> January-31<sup>st</sup> March 1950, TNA/41124.

*Table 3.5 Criminal cases in Dar es Salaam's local courts 1950-1960*

	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960
Kariakoo	n/a	n/a	535	804	701	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Ilala	n/a	n/a	535	581	599	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Kisutu	n/a	n/a	716	1105	765	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Liwali	n/a	n/a	273	313	282	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total	1,997	2,336	2,059	2,803	2,347	n/a	2,967	3,379	3,990	3,998	4,596

Sources: Dsm DAR for 1951, TNA 61/504/1/1951; TNA microfilm, Dsm Extra-Provincial Dist. Book Vol.V.I; & PARs 1956-59.

*Table 3.6 Criminal cases presided over by Resident Magistrate, Dar es Salaam 1951-1961*

1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961
2,532	2,951	2,407	2,795	3,026	2,743	3,068	5,343	5,948	5,516	4,416

Source: Judicial Dept. ARs

*Table 3.7 Cases dealt with by Dar es Salaam police, 1953-56*

	Penal code true cases	Breakings	Bicycle thefts	Thefts from vehicles
1951	5,132			
1952	6,166			
1953 – 1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr.	1,627			
1953 – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Qtr.	1,756			
1953 – 3 <sup>rd</sup> Qtr.	1,333	404	60	
1953 – 4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr.	789*	371	124	32
1953 - total	5,505			
1954 – 1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr.	1,350	390	105	41
1954 – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Qtr.	1,454	504	150	69
1954 – 3 <sup>rd</sup> Qtr.	1,205	396	108	46
1954 – 4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr.	1,266	420	90	
1954 - total	5,275			
1955 – 1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr.	1,311	417	98	49
1955 – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Qtr.	1,285	448	86	41
1955 – 3 <sup>rd</sup> Qtr.	1,103	326	69	20
1955 – 4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr.	1,569	292	81	' Almost disappeared'
1955 - total	5,268			
1956 – 1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr.			54	

\* No figure for this quarter survives; 789 has been arrived at through subtracting the other quarterly totals from the annual total reported in the AR. Compared to surviving quarterly figures, however, it is suspiciously low.

Statistics for other property offences do not survive. As some indication of their extent the following were reported in the quarterly police report for 1.10.55-31.12.55: Thefts over Shs.500/- - 29 (previous quarter – 31) and Thefts under Sh.500/- - 466 (prev. qtr. – 516).

Source: Police ARs and Qtrly Police Reports in TNA 90/1011 Vol.1.

increase in all areas which are being opened up or developed.’<sup>56</sup> The development of Dar es Salaam in particular considerably outpaced most of the remainder of Tanganyika, and this was reflected in the statistics. In 1949 the number of penal code cases dealt with by the Dar es Salaam police was 3,864. Three years later this figure was almost matched by the number of cases dealt with in the first half of the year alone: 3,092, which represented an increase over this short period of approximately 58 per cent.<sup>57</sup> During May and June 1952 –which included the months of Ramadhan when crime rates were said to be at their peak- 220 cases of housebreaking had been reported to the police.<sup>58</sup> In July that year the Municipal Council felt compelled to discuss ‘the alarming increase in crime’, urging ‘all those in authority to take vigorous steps to meet it’.<sup>59</sup> Any action taken appeared to have little effect. One year later, in the last quarter of 1953 –which did not coincide with Ramadhan- 124 cases of housebreaking were, on average, being reported each month. In the same period 32 thefts from vehicles and 124 bicycle thefts were also reported, making a quarterly total of 527 of these offences. In the first quarter of 1954 this figure rose slightly to 536. The Superintendent of Police reported that ‘vigorous action ha[d] been taken to clear the town of would-be thieves.’<sup>60</sup> Once again such action appeared to have little immediate impact. In the next quarter-year the total of reported breakings, thefts from vehicles and thefts of bicycles had increased to a total of 695. ‘Spiv’ raids -which had been conducted with ever greater frequency as the decade progressed- did, on the other hand, appear to be keeping crime in Dar es Salaam *more or less* in check. Between January 1953 and December 1956 the total number of cases under the penal code dealt with by the municipal police actually declined. This appears to have been reflected in the territorial statistics also, as convictions for property offences dropped from 10,317 in 1953 to 9,561 in 1954, and further still to 8,783 in 1955. ‘It is correct to assume’, wrote the Commissioner of Police in 1955,

that spiv raids carried out throughout the year have done a great deal to keep down crime in Dar es Salaam but these raids are not the final answer to crime prevention and detection, as the criminal classes will soon learn ways and means of avoiding being caught up in these raids, as they did in Nairobi from the earlier days of the Emergency.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> TO, 14.2.50.

<sup>56</sup> Police AR for 1949, p.10.

<sup>57</sup> CP to CS, 14<sup>th</sup> August 1952, TNA/21963/Vol.II.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> TC to CS, 14<sup>th</sup> July 1952, TNA/21963/Vol.II.

<sup>60</sup> QPR, Dsm Dist., 1<sup>st</sup> January-31<sup>st</sup> March 1954, TNA/90/1011/Vol.I.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 1<sup>st</sup> October-31<sup>st</sup> December 1955.

He was right to express caution. The following year the number of convictions once again began to rise. By 1960 the territorial total stood at 10,382. In Dar es Salaam, the primary location of reported crime throughout the colonial period, the proportion of property offences dealt with by police actually rose in the final years of colonial rule. Had crime rates in the capital and Tanganyika as a whole risen at a comparable rate this means that in 1960 approximately 4,412 such offences would have been reported in the town.<sup>62</sup> In fact this number was exceeded by a substantial amount; property offences reported to the police in Dar es Salaam that year having risen to 6,380. Information from courts in the municipality support this evidence, apparently confirming that crime in the capital escalated over the course of the 1950s at a rate that exceeded the rise in Tanganyika as a whole. In Dar es Salaam's local courts –presided over by the *Wakili* and *Liwali*– the number of criminal cases dealt with annually more than doubled between 1951 and 1960 from 1,997 to 4,596. A comparable increase was recorded in the Resident Magistrate's court.

Judging by colonial records then, the escalation in crime in Tanganyika during the period of the British mandate is striking. In 1922, the first year for which statistics survive, the number of criminal cases dealt with by the police stood at 4,960. In the final year of colonial rule the number of cases in which convictions were obtained alone was over 50,000. Property offences had proliferated at an almost comparable rate. From the introduction of the Tanganyikan Penal Code in 1930 to the end of colonial rule they had increased from around 2,000 to over 11,000. In Dar es Salaam itself, there were 443 prosecutions for offences against property in 1931. By the end of the colonial period the number of cases involving offences against property dealt with by Dar es Salaam police stood at 6,380. The escalation was apparent in bye-law offences also. In 1928, 8,005 offences against the 'social economy' of the territory were reported in Tanganyika. In the final year of colonial rule the number of such offences had risen to almost 34,000.

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<sup>62</sup> The number of cases of crimes against property dealt with by Dar es Salaam police in 1954 was 4,162, which was 43% of the total territorial convictions (the proportion convicted in Dsm stood at 7.8%). In 1955 3,632 property offences were dealt with by the police in Dar es Salaam, 42% of the territorial total of convictions (the proportion convicted in Dsm being 7.5%). Ibid.

*Table 3.8 Main Preventable Crimes Reported to the Police (Dsm) 1957-1960*

	1957	1958	1959	1960
Thefts under Shs1000/-	2,876*	2,704	3,003	3,829
Thefts over Shs1000/-	205*	98	101	95
Thefts by Public Servant	27	35	24	20
Housebreaking**	439	479	482	821
Burglary***	880	852	1,591	1,494
Cattle Stealing	16	32	20	11
Other Breakings	322	466	--	--
Robbery (& Extortion)	55	45	58	110
Total	4,820	4,711	5,279	6,380

\* Thefts under and over Shs500/- in 1957

\*\* 1959 = Breakings by day

\*\*\* 1959 = & Breakings by Night

Source: Police ARs

*Table 3.9 Cases in Kinondoni Native Court 1957-1960*

Offence	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961
Break-ins and burglaries	9	4	4	3	4
Stealing	78	57	43	34	52
Robbery		2	2		2
Assault/Unlawful wounding	82	81	89	79	87
Indecent assault	4	1	1	1	
Repatriation			1	1	
Rogue and vagabond	7			10	8
Trading without a licence	1				3
Native liquor regulations	17	15	7	15	20
Drunk and disorderly	8	7	5	5	14
Disorderly conduct	27	24	10	26	31
Showing disrespect/Abuse	21	35	16	10	22
Walking at night without a lamp	73	30	5		
Riding at night without a light	38	13	163	20	54
Riding bicycle without road licence/or with defective brakes/ or carrying a passenger on a bicycle	11	3	354	30	74
Possession or smoking of Bhang	1	5	1		1
Gambling			11		1
Tax offences		83	34	33	18
Other	30	40	46	28	36

Source: Lists in TNA Acc. No. 122.

## The causes of crime

The increase in crime –particularly property crime- that has occurred in western societies since the eighteenth century has been associated with the breakdown of communal social structures in the face of both industrialisation and urbanisation.<sup>63</sup> Scholars of crime in sub-Saharan Africa and other developing countries have turned to related arguments to explain the apparent escalation in crime rates there in the period since colonisation.<sup>64</sup> Economic ‘development’ led to the proliferation of commodities and the creation of new patterns of consumption, new needs and desires.<sup>65</sup> Urban growth, meanwhile, provided an environment in which the opportunities and temptations for theft have multiplied considerably at the same time as an impoverished urban class has emerged in the midst of relative plenty. Both these developments were highlighted by Paterson in his 1939 report on prisons in Eastern Africa:

A very rapid increase in the demand on life during the last 30 years has led inevitably to a[n]... increase in theft. There are so many more things that the heart desires, so many more things to be stolen. Once clothing was a sweaty rag; sometimes the rag was missing. Now the red fez is a great prize, a coloured shirt will attract attention, braces are not beyond the dream of a village beau. The rage for bicycles in Uganda has produced a fresh crop of young offenders. The subtler crimes follow a greater measure of education, and this time for the first time in history a case of forging a cheque has occurred in Somaliland.

Crime will further increase as this same demand to have life, and have it more abundantly, lures the more spirited and ambitious youngster from tending his parents’ cattle to the Gold paved streets of Nairobi, Kampala or Dar es Salaam. On arriving at the town they find the only occupation open to them is to serve in the most menial capacity for Shs2/- a month in an Indian shop. They are just as hungry as when their parents fed them at home, but food in the town has to be paid for, and moreover there are many things in the town besides food that they want to buy. So they steal, and the demand for life leads to the loss of liberty.<sup>66</sup>

From the little research that has been done on patterns of crime in developing countries, it appears that poverty has tended to be a crucial factor in determining the identity of both perpetrator *and* victim.<sup>67</sup> According to Iliffe, in tropical Africa

most urban crime grew out of poverty. It was crime by individuals against property... and most of the individuals were poor. Of those tried for robbery in Brazzaville in 1935-6, 42 per cent had no trade and 40 per cent were unemployed. ‘I was without work and destitute of resources’, one explained. ‘I stole to eat’, said another. The same was true in Timbuktu

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<sup>63</sup> See Emsley, *Crime*, pp.93-4.

<sup>64</sup> See Clinard & Abbott, *Crime*.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p.35.

<sup>66</sup> Paterson, ‘Report’, p.2.

<sup>67</sup> Clinard & Abbott, *Crime*, p.36.



in 1940, in Cotonou in 1952, and in Kinshasa during the 1960s. Of all males arrested for property offences in Kampala during 1968, 61 per cent were recorded as unemployed.<sup>68</sup>

Clinard and Abbott found that in 1960s Kampala most crimes involved property offences committed by the poor against the poor.<sup>69</sup> In an environment in which 'even the simplest object, such as a used shirt, a light bulb, or a piece of iron pipe, represents a desirable increment in wealth,' they point out, 'the potential market for stolen goods is much greater than in almost any developed country.'<sup>70</sup>

The prevalence of petty theft emerging amidst an environment of impoverishment echoes the findings of historians of crime in industrialising western societies. The notion of a 'criminal class', beloved of 'respectable' 19<sup>th</sup> century commentators on crime, has been undermined by recent historical research. 'Criminality, in the form of thefts committed by men from the poorer sections of the working class,' Emsley tells us, 'was transitory behaviour, possibly fostered by economic hardship, probably encouraged by opportunity.'<sup>71</sup> The same was true of colonial Africa, and was acknowledged as such by officials, in Dar es Salaam at least, where rising crime rates were invariably attributed to the lack of employment. In Tanganyika, unlike 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe, there was no attempt to identify a criminal type, someone whose natural proclivities inevitably resulted in criminal behaviour. Whilst Victorian commentators may have focused on 'evil ancestral influences'<sup>72</sup> to explain the tendency to offend, in Tanganyika environmental factors were the most frequently cited explanation and the breakdown of customary restraints and unemployment were both highlighted.<sup>73</sup> Although an anonymous official in the Kisarawe district book could describe the 'character of the Wazaramo' as 'peace loving and polite (though inclined to theft)',<sup>74</sup> more likely the descent into criminality was understood to result from increasing urbanisation. The urban environment, with its concentration of population, its disparities of wealth, its lack of rigid structures of control, and most of all its lack of opportunities for formal employment, was seen to corrupt the incoming African. As the largest town in the territory, Dar es Salaam posed a particular threat. Surviving statistics, which show the incidence of crime in the capital to be hugely

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<sup>68</sup> Iliffe, *African Poor*, p.176.

<sup>69</sup> Clinard & Abbott, *Crime*, p.36.

<sup>70</sup> Clinard & Abbott, *Crime*, p.257.

<sup>71</sup> Emsley, *Crime*, p.175.

<sup>72</sup> Victorian psychologist Henry Maudsley, quoted in Emsley, *Crime*, p.75.

<sup>73</sup> This is not to say that the notion of individual responsibility was ignored. Simply that criminal behaviour was felt to result from the moral weaknesses of African migrants in a corrupting urban environment.

disproportionate to its share of the territorial population, appear to confirm this perspective. However, statistics are opaque and can prove deceptive. Surviving territorial criminal records cover only those areas in which a police officer was stationed and thus exclude a large part of rural Tanganyika. In fact crime –and hence criminality– may have been much more common in the rural areas than colonial officials thought. Certainly recent research into crime in rural Britain in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries has led to a reappraisal of assumptions about the coincidence of urban growth and criminality there.<sup>75</sup> That similar assumptions on the part of colonial officials (and non-officials) may have been equally ill-informed, or at least exaggerated, should be borne in mind.

### **Explanations of crime in Dar es Salaam**

In 1924 Maj. Orde-Browne, Dar es Salaam's District Officer, complained that

The African community in town must unfortunately be regarded with marked suspicion; while there is naturally a very large element of thoroughly respectable people honestly occupied in a reputable calling, there is also a most undesirable floating population of criminals, or quasi-criminals, who thrive on the exploitation of unsophisticated natives who may pass through the town.<sup>76</sup>

The emergence of such malefactors, according to Orde-Browne in his 1926 report on labour, was bound up with the growth of large urban centres where Africans were 'living under demoralising and undesirable conditions.'<sup>77</sup> Having left their rural homes for waged labour, Africans drifted to the towns where

they find some sort of casual work, but probably fail to get steady employment; intervals of idleness between jobs tend to increase, until the individual drifts gradually into the class of unemployable loafer, from which stage it is fatally easy to join the definitely criminal class.<sup>78</sup>

As we have seen African morals were viewed by colonial officials as prone to corrosion through contact with the urban environment. The descent into criminality was the logical conclusion to this process. Four years later Fryer, the District Officer for Dar es Salaam, observed:

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<sup>74</sup> Kisarawe District Book Vol.1, TNA microfilm.

<sup>75</sup> Emsley, *Crime*, p.98.

<sup>76</sup> DAR for 1924, p.6, TNA/53.4.

<sup>77</sup> Orde-Browne, 'Labour', para. 114.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

What I see going on around me is more the type of development which produces from the waifs and strays and street urchins of London, the type of being that earns his living by his wits, who is a good judge at summing up his fellow man and has no respect for a law he can break with impunity.<sup>79</sup>

Crime was commonly associated with the process of detribalisation. For the editor of the *Tanganyika Standard*, writing in the wake of an attack on a European woman in 1952, it was

quite obvious that the majority of crimes such as theft and burglary are committed by Africans many of whom travel long distances drawn by the glamour of the big town. In the 'new community of strangers' these people lose the social responsibility that close village life imposed on them.

'The evils and dangers which can result if this drift [to the town] is allowed to continue', commented the Member for Local Government in the same year, 'are well known.'<sup>80</sup> Throughout the colonial period the tendency to criminality remained, as far as most observers were concerned, a vice predominantly acquired by Africans on their move to the towns.

Within Dar es Salaam itself the shortage of employment was singled out as the key contributor to burgeoning African criminality. So in the first district report, in 1920, APO West blamed the high levels of crime that had been prevalent in the early years of British rule on the presence of a large number of demobilised Africans in the town who were eventually repatriated to their districts of origin.<sup>81</sup> The following year, DO Brett voiced his concern about the return of some of these individuals:

A number of these people are unable to obtain suitable employment, others have no desire to work; these are potential thieves if they have no one who is willing to support them, since food is not available in Dar es Salaam as it may be at their homes. A successful theft of clothing or other articles which are disposed of outside the township procures the wherewithal for their maintenance for several days. During the last quarter of the year out of 90 cases of offences against property brought in the Magistrate's Court, 71 accused, ninety one per cent of the total, are natives of tribes domiciled outside Dar es Salaam, eg. MaKua, WaNyasa, Baganda, WaBondei etc.

The editor of the Dar es Salaam Times concurred, ascribing 'an orgy of housebreaking and theft on the part of native criminals' in the same year to 'an absence of employment

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<sup>79</sup> DAR for 1931, p.7, TNA/53.4.

<sup>80</sup> Memo. no.68, 6<sup>th</sup> May 1952, TNA/21616/Vol.III.

<sup>81</sup> DAR for 1919-20, p.9, TNA/1733:1.

for natives who turn their energies along the line of least effect.'<sup>82</sup> In 1930, after 1,898 labourers had been laid off by the Public Works Department, the Commissioner of Police made the same connection. Instances of crime 'were to be expected when the fact is taken into account that at the moment the town is overcrowded with alien unemployed natives who have been thrown out of work through the present economic depression.'<sup>83</sup> Six years later the Indian editor of the *Tanganyika Opinion* expressed his opinion that '[i]nextricably tangled with the question of tackling the criminally-minded native is the question of unemployment among the native community of Dar es Salaam.'<sup>84</sup> Expressing dismay about a case of theft in which an 'old native' said he had committed the offence because hunger had compelled him to do so, the editorial continued:

[N]ext to hunger comes the desire of the town native to buy wearing apparels, to use cycles and taxis, to use cinemas and to enjoy such amenities of western life which necessitate a large recurrent expenditure. This means that the unemployed is as dangerous to the society as the criminally-minded unless he is shown sympathy and is enabled to eke out an honest livelihood.

The lack of work was held to have a particularly bad effect upon African youth. In his 1931 report, Baker commented on the large number of detribalised youths, 'pick[ing] up a living as best they can' who frequently resorted to crime to get by.<sup>85</sup> Pike also singled out joblessness amongst this section of the community. Between the ages of fourteen and eighteen children who had originally come to the town as servants seldom found permanent employment. '[T]he four most impressionable years of these boys lives' were, according to Pike, 'spent in the company of loafers, petty thieves and card sharpers.'<sup>86</sup> An African writing to *Kwetu* in 1942 also bemoaned the pernicious effects of joblessness among the young. He regarded 'the number of unemployed youths as shocking'. Their semi-educated status gave them ambitions for urban employment which were not matched by the opportunities:

Several of these youths went to school with the intention of rendering their future secure, but through no fault of their own, but because of lack of finance on the part of their underpaid fathers, they had to leave or were ousted from school before completing their education. Now Business Firms do not accept services of these youths because they are unqualified, and as the little education they got is all bookish and they cannot use their hands to do any handicrafts. What can these youths be expected to do? They cannot be

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<sup>82</sup> DT, 28<sup>th</sup> May 1921, p.2/3.

<sup>83</sup> CP to CS, 12<sup>th</sup> August 1931, TNA/20219.

<sup>84</sup> TO, 20<sup>th</sup> November 1937, p.7.

<sup>85</sup> Baker, 'Social conditions', p.94.

<sup>86</sup> Pike, 'Native Affairs', p.9.

expected to be farmers since they were not trained in that line. They have already been initiated in profitable undertakings so what will they be given to do? Nothing? But they are people in need and as such in desperation they will turn to what will appear to them to be the easiest means of satisfying their wants, *namely theft, pick pocketing, robbery, bank holding* [sic], *etc.* It is true that they will have to abye [sic] these felonies but in course of a time they will become inured to the punishments inflicted on them and belittle same and grow to like their trade, while it is also very true that society will suffer intolerably.<sup>87</sup>

Another correspondent to *Kwetu* pointed out that it was not only unemployment, but also the low level of African wages which was resulting in the escalation of crime. Rajabu bin Alfani complained in a letter four years earlier that a monthly wage of Shs.25/- was hopelessly insufficient when daily food expenses alone could be Shs1/50, and that this was leading to the increasing incidence of theft. From the late-1930s some officials had also voiced concern about the low level of wages. Paterson had observed in 1939 that '[e]mployment at wages too low to allow a sufficiency of food tempts the simple and the hungry to steal.'<sup>88</sup> Seven years later, a conference of district officials in Eastern Province was told that 'a partial review of cases of theft and burglary had indicated that a considerable number of such offences had been found to have been committed by Africans at uneconomic rates of pay.'<sup>89</sup> In the same year, the District Commissioner observed that whilst an increase in thieving and bag-snatching in 1946 could be explained 'largely by the fact that a considerable number of Africans have crowded in the town, who having no work, steal to live', he also acknowledged that a contributory factor was 'an additional large number... employed at wages which do not enable themselves to subsist because of the high prices of food and rent, and other conditions now ruling.'<sup>90</sup> It was the absence of formal employment for the ever-growing numbers of rural-urban migrants, however, to which crime waves in Dar es Salaam continued to be primarily attributed. So an outbreak of burglaries in 1952 was, according to a secretariat official, 'due no doubt to the end of the boom or the beginning of the slump.'<sup>91</sup> Down cycles in the urban economy produced not only a shortage of work but an increase in lawlessness. 'It is most noticeable', wrote the Commissioner of Police in 1959, that the amount of crime varies with unemployment (which varies seasonally).<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> *Kwetu* No.5, 26<sup>th</sup> March 1942, p.7.

<sup>88</sup> Some observations on the treatment of the offender against the law [in Tanganyika] by Alexander Paterson (1939), p.1, TNA/27062.

<sup>89</sup> Mins of DCs conference, EP, 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1946, TNA/61/502/Pt.1.

<sup>90</sup> Uzaramo DAR for 1946, p.8, TNA/61/504/1/46.

<sup>91</sup> Sec. min., 26<sup>th</sup> August 1952, TNA/21963/Vol.1.

From the early 1940s unemployment became less of a cyclical and more of a structural phenomenon. The presence of un- or under-employed Africans in the town unsettled officials and increasingly the idea that removing the jobless from the town would help reduce crime there gained ground. 'From my position on the bench', announced the Resident Magistrate in judgment on Ramazan bin Saidi (who received a one year sentence for the theft of a bedspread) in 1944,

I can see that a great deal of stealing is going on and it seems to me that this type of offence will tend to increase in Dar es Salaam rather than diminish as long as unemployed natives are allowed to roam the town living by their wits. It appears to be not before time for a complete rounding up of persons such as the accused....<sup>93</sup>

In 1954, DC Harris complained about 'drifters' for whom there was no employment who were 'associated with crime of the most petty order.' He advocated ridding the town of those without visible means of support... [as] it would stop them masking the activities of the professional criminal.'<sup>94</sup> Vagabonds, he reported, were already regularly being cleared from the town. Campaigns against urban undesirables (including the jobless) did occur in the mid-1950s. According to an editorial in the *Standard* in 1957, however, it was not sufficient to cope with the situation in the town:

It is... known that there are far too many unemployed adult males roaming the town and outlying districts, the majority of whom have no desire whatsoever to work so long as they can prey on their neighbours, or worse still rob them.

When there was full employment in Dar es Salaam we cannot remember a single incident when the Police had to go into action against a mob, ...and we feel convinced that at the root of all the intimidation, most of the burglaries and thefts and other evils, lies the problem of clearing the towns of the spivs and hooligans.<sup>95</sup>

Such tactics were unsuccessful, however. Although an initial intensification of campaigns against the jobless and other undesirables met with some success between 1953 and 1956, at the same time as growing numbers of Africans were repatriated in the late-1950s rates of crime began to rise once more. It required more than just influx control to reverse the trend towards increasing crime.

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<sup>92</sup> Police AR for 1959, p.45.

<sup>93</sup> *TS*, 10<sup>th</sup> June 1944, p.16.

<sup>94</sup> *TS*, 28<sup>th</sup> December 1954.

<sup>95</sup> *TS*, 26<sup>th</sup> September 1957.

## **Chapter Four**

### **The Dar es Salaam underworld**

Like other urban centres throughout the world Dar es Salaam was the location of distinctive forms of criminality. The concentration of wealth and population provided an environment in which such quintessentially urban crimes as burglary, street robbery or pickpocketing could occur. The opportunities for illicit gain offered by the town undoubtedly attracted individuals who were keen to exploit these conditions. A small, but active, hard core of 'professional' criminals appears to have emerged in Dar es Salaam in the course of the colonial period. At the same time a distribution network for stolen property arose, which in providing a market for illicit goods seems to have encouraged crime.

#### **Crime against property**

Of all African infractions of colonial law it was the danger of 'detribalised' Africans resorting to property crime, or the threat posed by those who already had, that caused the greatest concern to colonial officials. Crime against property occurred throughout Dar es Salaam, although offences differed by area, and the incidence of crime appears to have differed markedly in the town's three designated zones. Housebreakings occurred in all three zones of the town, but appeared to be particularly common in the African and Asian quarters. Petty criminals, such as pickpockets and con-men, were also commonly found working the streets of these latter areas. And once again it was the inhabitants of the African township and Uhindini who were most likely to be a victim of violent crime; for they were also the commonest location of street robberies as well as the occasional armed hold-up. The higher incidence of crime in these areas had its roots in the lack of control over the urban population: the ineffective 'native' administration and the insignificant

police presence in Zones II and III contributed to the fragile order that held there, particularly in the inter-war period. In Uhindini, at several times between the wars, reports in the Indian press portrayed this order as verging on the point of collapse. Although this is probably exaggerated, it seems that the area was considerably more lawless than would have been tolerated in the European quarter. Due to the shortage of sources one can only speculate on the situation in the less policed but more densely populated African areas. Although in 1954 the Assistant Commissioner of Police in Dar es Salaam complained that '[t]he crime problem of Dar es Salaam has its roots in the densely populated Native Quarter in which the poorly constructed houses are most vulnerable and street lighting is either very poor or non-existent.' 'A large portion of its perimeter consists of rough bush country,' he observed, 'affording excellent natural cover for bad characters at all times of the day.'<sup>1</sup>

### **Break-ins and burglaries**

In the outbreak of lawlessness that followed WWI, housebreaking was common throughout the town. 'When it is stated that there is hardly a European house that had not been broken into, at one time or another,' complained the *Dar es Salaam Times* in June 1920, 'it will be realised to what extent the natives went in their depredations.'<sup>2</sup> The rash of burglaries was reined in briefly through the arrest of 'all the more important criminals'.<sup>3</sup> This respite was short-lived. The following year the *Times* was speaking once again of an 'epidemic of housebreaking now so prevalent in the town'.<sup>4</sup> By 1925 the number of housebreaking cases police were dealing with in Dar es Salaam had reached 256, whilst it is likely that at least as many went unreported. By 1931 a correspondent in the *Tanganyika Standard* was complaining that '[t]he state of public security in this town is becoming alarming... [b]urglaries are of almost nightly occurrence'.<sup>5</sup> The following year an official remarked that '[b]urglary, housebreaking and offences of the kind are most common throughout the Territory and in Dar es Salaam have caused an immense

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<sup>1</sup> QPR, Dsm Dist, 1<sup>st</sup> July-30<sup>th</sup> September 1954 TNA/90/1011/Vol.1.

<sup>2</sup> *DT*, 9<sup>th</sup> June 1920, p.5.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *DT*, 30<sup>th</sup> April 1921, p.6.

<sup>5</sup> Letter from Dogberry, *TS*, 15<sup>th</sup> August 1931, p.7.



amount of trouble.<sup>6</sup> Such offences were by no means restricted to Uzunguni. In the early nineteen twenties, when property crimes were often reported by the *Dar es Salaam Times*, burglaries in the African areas appeared to slightly outnumber those in the rest of the town. It is far more likely, however, that they occurred with much greater frequency in the 'township' than elsewhere. Not only were Africans less likely to report crimes to the police, but also those that were reported were less likely to be recorded in the (European owned) *Times* than crimes against Europeans. Housing in the African areas was also much more vulnerable to being broken into. A common means of entry into African homes was for the burglar to simply tunnel underneath a wall or door.<sup>7</sup>

Burglaries in the Indian quarter were also reported in the *Dar es Salaam Times*, though a much fuller impression of the incidence of crime in Uhindini can be drawn from Indian newspapers, editions of which survive from 1930. A 1931 editorial in the *Tanganyika Opinion* complained of 'the daily occurrences of thefts and robberies in some part of the Indian area or another.'<sup>8</sup> Three years later the editor of its rival newspaper, the *Tanganyika Herald*, suggested 'not a single night passes without a burglary or theft.'<sup>9</sup> Although most of these offences were more likely to have involved stealing from the person, pickpocketing or shoplifting, burglaries from both houses and commercial premises in Uhindini were reported with regularity in the Indian press. In one incident in February 1935 the shop of Madowji Ukabhai, at Library Square, was broken into in the small hours of the morning:

Shouts of 'Thief! Thief!' awakened the people of this locality and one native was seen in the shop and the other watching in the street when they and an *Askari* arrived on the scene.<sup>10</sup>

They fled to Kisutu, an area, the *Herald* observed, which 'generally shelters native thieves.' On another occasion in the early 1930s the merchant house of Messrs. Kassavji Anandji & Co. were the victims of a daytime hold-up by a gang comprising two Indians and two Africans:

All of a sudden three persons dashed into the office and one of them showed Liladhar [an employee] his revolver and demanded from him the key of the safe. The other two had big

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<sup>6</sup> Memo by AG, 29<sup>th</sup> Feb. 1932, PRO/CO/691/125/1.

<sup>7</sup> See eg. *DT*, 28<sup>th</sup> October 1922, p.9.

<sup>8</sup> *TO*, 5<sup>th</sup> August 1931, p.8.

<sup>9</sup> *TH*, 7<sup>th</sup> July 1934, p.12.

<sup>10</sup> *TH*, 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1935, p.4.

knives in their hands and the fourth one was standing in the passage door. ...Liladhar was ordered to open the safe [from which jewellery and Shs4,500/- was stolen]... There were cheques and documents in the safe which they left untouched and on completion of their business they quietly walked out in the street. The whole of this business took not more than seven minutes.<sup>11</sup>

Whilst armed hold-ups such as this were few and far between, more petty forms of theft from commercial premises was common. A widely used ploy of gangs which frequented the area was for an African to begin a quarrel with an Indian shopkeeper. His cohorts would then come to his assistance and in the ensuing melee goods would be removed from the store.<sup>12</sup> 'It has transpired', wrote the editor of the *Tanganyika Herald* in 1931,

that the native loafer has found himself encouraged in this profession by the idea that it is almost difficult [sic] for Indian shopkeepers to get police protection either on the spot or at the police station, and the profession is being carried on increasingly unchecked and undetected.<sup>13</sup>

The conspicuous absence of a regular police presence meant that there was little the storeholders could do about it. According to the Indian press, it was not only Indian shopkeepers who felt under threat, residents of Uhindini in general were all too aware of the insecurity of their position. 'No body considers himself safe even in the daytime,' wrote the editor of the *Tanganyika Herald* in August 1931, 'not to speak of the intensity of terror during the night.'<sup>14</sup> Such expressions of anxiety about levels of crime in Uhindini were reported with regularity in the Indian newspapers.

If both the settler and the Indian press expressed concern about the level of burglaries Dar es Salaam in between the wars, the escalation of such offences in the post-war period was viewed with increasing disquiet. The situation in the capital at the end of the war was, despite the public anxiety reflected in the newspapers, not too serious. In October and November 1945 33 cases of housebreaking and burglary had been reported in the capital, which if taken as representative would lead to an annual figure of around 200.<sup>15</sup> This compares favourably with the 256 reported in 1925. It was from this base, however, that the dramatic post-war increase in housebreakings and burglaries took place. The

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<sup>11</sup> *TH*, 4<sup>th</sup> August 1931, p.12.

<sup>12</sup> See for eg. *TH*, 14<sup>th</sup> July 1931, p.14; or *TO*, 12<sup>th</sup> November 1937, p.4; or the extract from the *African Sentinel*, 1<sup>st</sup> March 1942, in TNA/21963/Vol.II.

<sup>13</sup> *TH*, 14<sup>th</sup> July 1931, p.14.

<sup>14</sup> *TH*, 11<sup>th</sup> August 1931, p.9.

<sup>15</sup> CS to D.K. Patel M.L.C., 19<sup>th</sup> December 1946, TNA/20219/Vol.II.

following October and November saw 49 cases of these offences, which indicates an annual total rising to around 300.<sup>16</sup> In August that year a correspondent to the *Standard* identified the increasing incidence of burglaries occurring in 'broad daylight'.<sup>17</sup> 'It is indeed a most unhappy state of affairs', complained the Resident Magistrate the following month, 'that nothing, unless under lock and key, is safe from the teeming number of thieves in Dar es Salaam, and even lock and key are not really proof against a large number of the thieving population.'<sup>18</sup> In the territory as a whole the same year the number of cases of housebreaking, burglary and allied offences for which convictions were obtained stood at 396. By 1950 this had more than doubled to 938.<sup>19</sup> Whilst this increase may in small part be accounted for by a growing proportion of cases being reported thanks to increasing confidence in the police, it nevertheless represents a significant escalation in the number of burglaries in Tanganyika. Being by far the largest urban centre in the territory (and expanding at an ever faster pace), the bulk of these offences occurred in Dar es Salaam. By the end of 1952 over one hundred house- or shop-breakings were being reported in the capital every month.<sup>20</sup> The *Standard* commented in May that year that 'much public concern is being felt at the rising number of burglaries and other robberies which threaten the safety and well-being of members of all communities'.<sup>21</sup> Rates continued to rise. In the last six months of 1953, 775 such offences were reported making a monthly average of 129. The number reported in the whole of 1954 was 1710 – the monthly average thus increasing to 143. Whilst 1955 saw a slight decline in the national and municipal statistics, the next year they began to rise once again. In 1957 the number of cases of housebreaking, burglary and allied offences for which convictions were obtained in the whole of Tanganyika stood at 1,717 and by the final year of colonial rule the total exceeded two thousand, reaching 2,115 in 1961.<sup>22</sup> In Dar es Salaam itself, in the penultimate year of colonial rule, 2,315 such offences had been reported to the police, bringing the monthly average close to 200.

As between the wars, all of Dar es Salaam's communities continued to be victim to burglaries after 1945, though houses in Zone III remained most vulnerable. Of the 116

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Letter, *TS*, 31<sup>st</sup> August 1946, p.5

<sup>18</sup> *TS*, 28<sup>th</sup> September 1946, p.5.

<sup>19</sup> Police ARs for 1939, 1950 and 1961.

<sup>20</sup> *TS*, 1<sup>st</sup> March 1952, p.1.

<sup>21</sup> *TS*, 31<sup>st</sup> May 1952, p.24.

<sup>22</sup> Police ARs for 1957 and 1961.

housebreakings reported in May 1952, 67 were into African houses. In June, 56 African houses were broken into out of a total of 104.<sup>23</sup> 'Africans going out in the evenings now lock and bar their windows', reported the *Standard* the same year, 'a few years ago this was unnecessary.'<sup>24</sup> The majority of cases of housebreaking and burglary occurred in the area served by the Msimbazi police station, which was responsible for the locations where the bulk of the African population lived, including Kariakoo, Ilala, Buguruni and Magomeni. In the first nine months of 1955 over half of all the burglaries dealt with by Dar es Salaam police were reported at this station; 324 out of an *annual* total of 840 (a further 173 cases of housebreaking were also reported). In the same period just 33 and 105 cases were reported at Kilwa Road and Central police stations respectively.<sup>25</sup> Regarding breakings, the Assistant Commissioner of Police wrote in 1955, '[w]ith the *exception* of Msimbazi, the position is not unsatisfactory.'<sup>26</sup> Reporting a town-wide deterioration in the situation two years later, the same officer noted that burglaries had increased particularly in the Magomeni, Kariakoo and Buguruni areas. In the face of this new wave of breakings the police asked 'householders... to report at once cases where persons living in their quarters seem to be enjoying a standard of living which is obviously beyond their means.'<sup>27</sup> Four months later they were forced to put on extra night patrols to combat burglaries which the *Standard* described as being 'rampant in Dar es Salaam'. It was not only the African areas which were affected: 'In one small area alone in Oyster Bay,' reported the *Standard*, 'money has been stolen from some of the houses while their occupants have been asleep'.<sup>28</sup> Four break-ins in this area were attributed to a burglar who 'generally prefers to gain access to the houses by climbing the verandas or drainpipes....'

In many respects targeting European or Asian houses was the wisest course of action for thieves in the capital. Whilst they may have been more difficult to enter, their contents would generally have been of much greater value, and if apprehended the intruder would not have been vulnerable to the 'instant justice' occasionally meted out to suspects caught in the African areas. The treatment of Maganga Mnameta, a victim of 'instant justice' in Buguruni in November 1957, gives some indication of the intensity of feeling amongst

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<sup>23</sup> CP to CS, 14<sup>th</sup> August 1952, TNA/21963/Vol.II.

<sup>24</sup> *TS*, 1<sup>st</sup> March 1952, p.1.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 1<sup>st</sup> October-31<sup>st</sup> December 1955.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 1<sup>st</sup> April-30<sup>th</sup> June 1955. (My italics).

<sup>27</sup> *TS*, 14<sup>th</sup> May 1957, p.1.

Dar es Salaam's African communities arising from the incidence of theft in Zone III. He was caught in the house of Asha binti Mwinyikani and apprehended after being chased by her son, Rajabu bin Hamisi, and a crowd that had gathered at the scene of the crime. The son, according to his own testimony, then went to the police whilst the crowd 'stood by the thief'. On his return Maganga was dead:

The police pathologist said that it appeared that Maganga, a night watchman, had been tied at the wrists when blows were inflicted. Several of the injuries showed the blows had been inflicted with extreme brutal force.

Rajabu s/o Hamisi said that he chased Maganga with the branch of a palm tree. He alleged Maganga drew a knife, but threw it down when told to by the crowd. Those who were near him started hitting Maganga in revenge.

The coroner said that Rajabu had impressed him as a person who knew a great deal more of the circumstances surrounding the death of Maganga than he cared to disclose. He did not believe that Maganga had a knife or that Rajabu could not identify those who struck Maganga.<sup>29</sup>

The circumstances surrounding this incident are murky indeed. It is possible that the murder victim was not a thief at all and that his assailants had ulterior motives for their actions. If this version of events was simply a fabrication, however, it was one that was plausible to those who concocted it, as well as, for that matter, to the judge who recorded a verdict of murder by persons unknown. On the other hand, were the allegations against Maganga true, his treatment was spectacularly disproportionate to the offence committed: he had been caught stealing merely a bundle of clothing.

In allegedly stealing clothing Maganga Mnameta would have been far from alone, for this modest type of booty was –along with cash– perhaps the most common target of burglars throughout the colonial period. That this was so indicates the poverty of both the thieves themselves and the majority of their victims. According to the 1924 police report, 'property stolen is of infinitesimal value, and very often consists of rags of native clothing.'<sup>30</sup> Two decades later the situation remained substantially unchanged, with items stolen in a wave of burglaries, according to the Standard, consisting mainly of 'only small quantities of clothing and other property.'<sup>31</sup> Judging by accounts in the settler press – which was more likely to report serious incidents of theft– the reported takings from

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<sup>28</sup> TS, 7<sup>th</sup> September 1957, p.2.

<sup>29</sup> TS, 16<sup>th</sup> November 1957, p.1.

<sup>30</sup> Police AR for 1924 in PRO/CO691/78.

<sup>31</sup> TS, 1<sup>st</sup> March 1952, p.1.

burglaries were indeed often extremely modest, even in the case of thefts from European or Asian properties. For example, the *Dar es Salaam Times* of 21st October 1922 reports the theft of the following from the house of one K.F. Burt: 'property comprising shirts, collars, handkerchiefs, Cambridge running shorts and singlets, and a Gillette razor.'<sup>32</sup> In September 1946 the *Standard* reported the conviction of a burglar who had stolen just two pairs of trousers from a house in Uhindini. He received an 18 month sentence for the offence (having had previous convictions).<sup>33</sup> In October 1959, Haji Salum, of no fixed abode, was sentenced to three months for the theft of a handkerchief and a feeding bottle teat worth just seventy-five cents.<sup>34</sup> European and Asian homes or commercial premises were also subject to serious predation. Jewellery and cash were commonly stolen. In 1923 Sadiki bin Sultani was sentenced to three years imprisonment for stealing watches and jewellery worth £80-100 from the tent of one Mr. Grant. He was given a further two years for the theft of £12 worth of clothing and other effects from C. S. M. Marchant of the King's African Rifles.<sup>35</sup> Saidi bin Mohamed was sentenced to six years imprisonment in 1949, for breaking into a warehouse and stealing property to the value of £900.<sup>36</sup> In 1960, Juma Saidi was sentenced to twenty one years for thirty five offences in the Oyster Bay area involving property to the value of £430.<sup>37</sup> Burglaries in the African townships tended more consistently to be modest affairs and were as likely to be the work of individuals who would steal anything that was removable. For example, the *Dar es Salaam Times* of 21st May 1921 reported a brass cooking pot, two pillows, a mosquito net, several khangas and a blanket being among the items stolen by Salehe bin Abdulla from two African homes.<sup>38</sup> Even in more crime-ridden times, the objects of theft continued to be modest. In September 1957, Maulidi bin Salum was found in possession of a number of white shirts, bed sheets, a mattress and blankets, mosquito nets and other sundry articles of clothing.<sup>39</sup> As in the European and Asian areas, it was money and clothing that was most commonly reported stolen.

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<sup>32</sup> *DT*, 21<sup>st</sup> October 1922, p.9.

<sup>33</sup> *TS*, 28<sup>th</sup> September 1946, p.5.

<sup>34</sup> *TS*, 5<sup>th</sup> October 1959.

<sup>35</sup> *DT*, 25<sup>th</sup> August 1923, p.7.

<sup>36</sup> *TS*, 26<sup>th</sup> February 1949.

<sup>37</sup> *TS*, 27<sup>th</sup> August 1960.

<sup>38</sup> *DT*, 21<sup>st</sup> May 1921, p.4.

<sup>39</sup> *TS*, 9<sup>th</sup> September 1957



Map 4 Dar es Salaam c.1957  
Source: Leslie, Survey

## Theft from the person

If burglaries and break-ins were probably the largest identifiable category of property offences in Dar es Salaam during the British period, a variety of other offences, generally more petty, variously grouped together as thefts under the penal code (or in other places as stealing) were actually much more common. Theft from the person, for example, was, in various guises, widespread in the town throughout the period under consideration. It could take the form of pickpocketing, bag-snatching, or more seriously of street robbery accompanied with violence (or the threat of violence).

The most complete impression of the incidence of such crimes comes once again from the Indian newspapers from the 1930s. Theft from the person was an everyday occurrence in Uhindini. Jewellery was particularly vulnerable to being snatched, often by gangs of thieves who purportedly hung around the Indian quarter. 'It appears that the gang has come out again', wrote the editor of the *Herald* after a golden necklace had been stolen from a young child on Windsor Street.<sup>40</sup> 'As usual they appear to have confined their activities to the Indian quarters', he continued, '[b]ut it is feared they may extend them over other parts of town.' In January 1934 a gang was 'once again reported to be let loose.'<sup>41</sup> 'Petty cases of pilferage, of snatching bangles from children and necklaces from old ladies', observed the editor of the *Herald* that year, 'are too numerous to mention.'<sup>42</sup> 'This fortnight is reported to have witnessed a number of Indian ladies falling prey to native scoundrels and terrorists in the main streets and in broad daylight', the same paper declared eight months later. 'People are fed up with reporting cases to the Charge Office', it continued, '[t]hey are required to face examination and cross-examination by police with no practical results.'<sup>43</sup> According to another editorial from the same year: 'The Indian public, especially ladies, view this state of affairs with great alarm. The latter find it unsafe to walk the streets even in the daytime. People see a danger in carrying money with them, cyclists must have their eyes fixed on their machines'.<sup>44</sup>

Pickpockets were a common hazard of town life. The railway station, where the

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<sup>40</sup> *TH*, 27<sup>th</sup> February 1932, p.7.

<sup>41</sup> *TH*, 13<sup>th</sup> January 1934, p.10.

<sup>42</sup> *TH*, 7<sup>th</sup> July 1934, p.12.

<sup>43</sup> *TH*, 16<sup>th</sup> March 1935, p.4.

<sup>44</sup> *TH*, 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1935, p.6.



comings and going of passengers -particularly unwary new arrivals carrying valuables- appears to have been a favoured haunt. An Indian victim there in 1926 was relieved of the substantial sum of Shs.6,100/-. It was subsequently recovered and a gang of six pickpockets convicted and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment.<sup>45</sup> A few years later Juma bin Abdalla was charged with the same offence, stealing Shs.20/- from an Indian. According to the *Standard*, there was no shortage of people to take his place. 'At least twenty young natives in Court during the case showed unwonted attention as they hung closely on every word spoken by accused and witnesses', the paper reported. '[I]t was an excellent opportunity for anyone to study the art of picking pockets – with particular reference to avoiding those slips which may result in an appearance in the dock.'<sup>46</sup> Throughout the colonial period pocket-picking seems to have been an activity particularly associated with African youth. In 1955, Assistant Commissioner Brockwell, informed the public that although delinquency was not a serious problem there were 'some clever young pickpockets in the towns'. 'I recommend you', he warned, 'to keep your money in an inside pocket.'<sup>47</sup>

Street robberies, which were also categorised as theft, were another Dar es Salaam hazard. Once again they were frequently reported in the Indian press. In a case from 1931, the disappointed thieves rebuked their victims for the slender takings. 'Big men like you', the robbers were reported to have complained, 'should be ashamed to go out with only fifteen cents in their pockets.'<sup>48</sup> 'Instances of this nature occur daily', observed the editor, 'and it is difficult for one to get police aid on the spot.' In June 1932 an Indian was reported to have fallen 'victim to the hold up plan of a native gang in a lane in the Indian area – his pockets were searched and a gold chain was taken from his neck.'<sup>49</sup> In 1937 another victim died as a result of such an attack.<sup>50</sup> Later that year Gujarati merchants wrote to the *Herald* complaining that 'during busy hours a gang of thieves armed with sticks and knives, loaf about the bazaar and carry on their profession without any fear of being apprehended and that the situation is going from bad to worse'.<sup>51</sup> 'The recent development', wrote the editor the previous week, 'is that robbery takes place in

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<sup>45</sup> Police AR for 1926, p.37.

<sup>46</sup> *TS*, 8<sup>th</sup> June 1935, p.12.

<sup>47</sup> *TS*, 13<sup>th</sup> December 1955.

<sup>48</sup> *TH*, 11<sup>th</sup> August 1931, p.9.

<sup>49</sup> *TH*, 4<sup>th</sup> June 1932, p.4.

<sup>50</sup> *TH*, 16<sup>th</sup> January 1937, p.6.

<sup>51</sup> *TH*, 20<sup>th</sup> November 1937, p.3.

broad daylight and any attempt to chase a thief is answered by him with violence.’<sup>52</sup>

Such attacks were by no means restricted to Uhindini. Certain areas in the African township also became particularly feared because of the high incidence of robberies which occurred there. Ilala Road was one such place, which, according to a letter in the African newspaper *Kwetu*, had ‘been infiltrated by enemies who perpetrate violence’:

From time to time, beginning around seven o’clock in the evening, if a child or woman passed alone they would appear to her, and ask her, who are you? Give me your money or your clothing and be safe, or you shall lose your life. And at ten in the evening you men must be seized by a thief hiding any place among the Albizzia trees.’<sup>53</sup>

Six years earlier the Indian-run *Herald* had seen fit to complain about the same area: ‘In consequence [of] the lack of lighting at this native location, and the absence of police supervision, native residents were being seriously molested.’<sup>54</sup> Little appeared to have been done by the authorities to reduce the danger in the intervening period. Neither did the situation improve during WWII. By 1945 DC Bone was complaining of ‘the dangers of assault and robbery’ in the area.<sup>55</sup> Another place singled out by Bone was Mnazi Mmoja - the open space situated between Zones II and III comprising both recreation grounds and remnant bush. This was perhaps the most notorious haunt of muggers in the British colonial period. Kichwele Street, which bisected Mnazi Mmoja connecting Uhindini with Kariakoo, was, according to a correspondent to the *Standard* in 1949, ‘infested with thieves who take advantage of the poor lighting.’<sup>56</sup> Both Africans and Indians, men and women formed their prey. Complaints were made, for example, in *Zuhra* (the Swahili newspaper printed by Machado Plantan) in February 1951 that *wahuni* were hanging around Mnazi Mmoja (and *Tuwa tugawe* – see below) following women returning from the cinema and attacking them.<sup>57</sup> A year earlier an Indian was attacked by two Africans who made off with just a saw, an inner tube and a pair of shoes which had been forcibly removed from their victim. Seven or eight similar incidents had occurred over the previous month, the *Standard* reported.<sup>58</sup> A correspondent to the paper the same day complained that there was ‘not a single day when robbery has not taken

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<sup>52</sup> *TH*, 13<sup>th</sup> November 1937, p.6.

<sup>53</sup> *Kwetu*, 14th Jan. 1939, p.29. Quoted in Anthony, “Culture and Society”, p.191.

<sup>54</sup> *TH*, 30th September 1933, p.5.

<sup>55</sup> DC to Supt.Pol., Dsm, 4.5.45, TNA/540/271/1.

<sup>56</sup> Letter from Kichwele resident, *TS*, 9<sup>th</sup> April 1949, p.9.

<sup>57</sup> *Zuhra*, 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1951, in TNA/540/21/8.

<sup>58</sup> *TS*, 13<sup>th</sup> February 1950.



Map 5 *Kariakoo, 1940* (note: Mkunguni Street runs past the central Market and out across the 'Open Space' [Mnazi Mmoja])  
 Source: Kironde, "Land use structure"

place in the major road which passes through the open space referred [sic].'<sup>59</sup> The incident had occurred on Mkunguni Street, which ran across the upper end of Mnazi Mmoja, connecting the African and Indian quarters. A similar incident that had taken place the previous week was described by 'Unprotected' in a letter to the *Standard*:

On the moonlit night of Friday past, at as early an hour as 8pm an Indian youth was held up by hooligans and robbed of his fountain pen, wrist watch and money in Mikungani [sic] Street. ...I would explain that Mikungani Street is a tarred, not-so-badly lit street, running from opposite the Indian junior school towards the new market, and the robbery, I am told, took place almost on the edge of the street, somewhere between the Municipal Lavatory and the *Mbuyu* [tr. baobab] tree. Dozens of robberies have taken place in this vicinity, so that the area in question has come to be known as '*Tuwa tugawe*' which means 'put it down and let us divide'. And instead of drastic measures for the safety of the public all we get from the authorities is the advice to 'keep to the roads' and 'walk in pairs'!<sup>60</sup>

Another correspondent to the paper had warned that 'these natives [robbers] have learnt a trick to drag the person from the street into darkness with a neck press until he is lightened of his belongings.'<sup>61</sup> 'Undesirable incidents interrupting the peace of Asian dwellers of Kariako [sic]', he reported, 'take place very often now.' The notoriety of Mnazi Mmoja, and *Tuwa tugawe* in particular, was also recollected by oral informants:

At Mnazi Mmoja it was a gang, not an individual, consisting of young people in a kind of alliance. They were jobless idlers who had turned to crime. They stayed not exactly at Mnazi Mmoja but at a place known as *Tuwa tugawe*. If they wanted to rob you, at first just one of them would attack and then others –hiding nearby- would help him if he needed it.<sup>62</sup>

Women, according to Masudi Ali, were particularly vulnerable:

There was one place at Mnazi Mmoja called *Tuwa tugawe*. Ladies would pass there at night carrying something – you know it was ladies behaviour to send food to their men. So when they came to this place they'd come across gangs who'd demand that they put down whatever they were carrying. They were crossing from Kisutu to Kariakoo and they had to pass this way.<sup>63</sup>

The incidence of robberies was not helped by the apparent lack of a police presence in the area. 'H.R.' reported in a letter to the *Standard* that:

To look things up for myself, I toured the whole area from Arab Street round Msimbazi, Kichwele, New and Livingstone Street, beyond the now notorious Mkunguni Street from 6.15 to past 8pm for a couple of days in succession. But I could not see even a fleeting shadow of an *Askari*'s ghost. Later on I looked up things in Zone I and found *Askaris* here,

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Letter from 'Unprotected', 4<sup>th</sup> February 1950, TNA/20219/Vol.II.

<sup>61</sup> *TS*, 17.2.50.

<sup>62</sup> Interview No.2.

<sup>63</sup> Interview No.7.

there and everywhere, not solos but mostly in pairs. I still wonder whom or what they are generally guarding there.<sup>64</sup>

The most plausible answer was, of course, European persons and property. However, whilst it is probably true that, as in the inter-war period, Zone I continued to be better policed than the African or Indian quarters, this did not mean Europeans in Dar es Salaam were not beginning to fall victim to 'muggings' or 'snatchings' themselves. After WWII, reports in the *Standard* of thefts from Europeans grew more frequent. After two failed attempts of bag-snatching from Europeans in 1946, the paper reported that this offence was on the increase. 'There is in this town,' observed Resident Magistrate Platts two years later, 'a considerable number of undesirable Africans who loaf around Acacia Avenue [the main European shopping street] and its adjoining streets for the sole purpose of stealing ladies handbags and anything which is left unprotected in stationary motor cars or in bike baskets.'<sup>65</sup> Later the same year it was reported that in two separate incidents European women had been attacked on Ocean Road, one of them being threatened with a knife. Whether the timing of this phenomenon had anything to do with a lessening of European prestige amongst the African population is unclear. Within a decade though, bag-snatching and attacks on women had become common enough to lead to nurses at a Kinondoni hostel being taught self-defence to protect themselves against assailants.<sup>66</sup>

### **A criminal economy?**

The concentration of population and wealth which existed in Dar es Salaam appears to have led to the emergence of a criminal network exploiting the multifarious opportunities for illicit gain present in the capital. This network consisted of various criminal types engaging in the illegal acquisition, receipt and distribution of property. It hinged around the market for illicit goods. Links with areas beyond Dar es Salaam were often vital to the various groups taking advantage of these opportunities.

Smugglers of contraband goods were one such group. As Tanganyika's main port, and

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<sup>64</sup> Letter from H.R., *TS*, 16<sup>th</sup> February 1950.

<sup>65</sup> *TS*, 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1948, p.19.

<sup>66</sup> Photo and caption, *TS*, 19<sup>th</sup> June 1957, p.5.

its' principal urban centre, Dar es Salaam and its environs were the location of widespread smuggling throughout the colonial period. Contraband from Zanzibar,<sup>67</sup> located just a few hours away by boat, was particularly common, as customs duties in the protectorate tended to be lower than those levied in Tanganyika, and as a consequence various items were frequently brought illegally to the mainland. The main smuggled items, according to the Comptroller of Customs in 1934, were sugar, matches, playing cards and tobacco, although *khangas* and other types of material such as *merikani* were also popular.<sup>68</sup> The points of entry were multiple. 'Trouble spots' reported in one file included Tanga, Pangani, Bagamoyo, Kisiju, Rufiji and Kilwa along the coast. In addition, smuggling was common in the environs of Dar es Salaam, at fishing villages to the north, such as Msasani and Kunduchi, and to the south, such as Mji Mwema.<sup>69</sup> In Msasani Bay, according to Leslie

they could land... quite safely. In those days it was fairly deserted by authority even though it was within the township boundaries. There was a village there of Washomvi, who claimed descent from Persians. They would probably be in charge of the smuggling trade. But there were other little villages along the coast there too, certainly as far as Kunduchi – fishing villages that wouldn't be at all supervised.<sup>70</sup>

In one incident in 1934, acting on a tip-off about smuggling at Msasani, police made some arrests on the shore, but not before an incoming *dhow* had been warned of the raid. The *dhow* turned away and was later found to have unloaded its cargo at the island of Mbezi, opposite Kunduchi village, from where it was relayed to Dar es Salaam by catamaran. Thirty-seven bags of Java sugar and five cases of matches were found at the house of one of those arrested. Commenting on the case a CID officer wrote to the Commissioner of Police:

I would not for a moment contend [sic] myself in assuming that the case at issue is an isolated one, but rather that smuggling is carried out on broad lines, and the loss of Government revenue should be the subject of serious consideration. It would be equally idle to pretend that the Native Authority at Kunduchi or along the coast is not conversant with what is taking place although no information from this source is ever received by the Police.<sup>71</sup>

The police and customs officials relied heavily on a system of rewards for information

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<sup>67</sup> According to Leslie (Interview No.11) Tumbatu island in particular was 'a real smugglers cove'.

<sup>68</sup> Comptroller of customs to the Auditor, 15<sup>th</sup> January 1934, TNA/12402/Vol.1; and Leslie interview.

<sup>69</sup> Reports in TNA/12402; Leslie interview.

<sup>70</sup> Leslie interview.

<sup>71</sup> Supt. Hornett to CP, 16<sup>th</sup> February 1934, TNA/12402/Vol.1.

about such activities. The Comptroller informed the Chief Secretary in January 1935 that it was his opinion

that the general dissemination among Coast natives of the knowledge that substantial rewards should be paid for information leading to the detection of smuggling is the most valuable, and probably the only practicable, means of checking the smuggling which is undoubtedly endemic on the whole littoral between Dar es Salaam and Tanga.<sup>72</sup>

Precious little intelligence was forthcoming. '[L]ocal opinion', as an official had observed a few years earlier, 'being usually on the side of the smuggler will not as a rule bring the facts to official notice.'<sup>73</sup> Even within the port of Dar es Salaam, the ability of the police and the customs department to control smuggling was limited. Here, the harbour front was policed by patrols day and night which entered *dhow*s and other small craft looking for contraband. The foreshore along Azania Front -where there was 'danger of shore boats landing goods under cover of darkness'- was also subject to nightly patrols. The Comptroller acknowledged, however, that in conditions such as existed in Dar es Salaam eradication of smuggling was unrealistic. 'With the harbour full of pulling boats, motor boats and sailing craft, all mobile in the highest degree,' he informed the secretariat, 'complete security against smuggling can only be realised with a small preventive army.'<sup>74</sup> The position in the town, though, was significantly better than that which prevailed north of the capital and further along the coast. The coastline between Dar es Salaam and Tanganyika's northern border was under no effective control whatsoever. The prevalence of smuggling there 'by Swahili and Arab *dhow*s' coming from the islands of Zanzibar resulted in the introduction of bicycle patrols in 1938 covering the whole three hundred miles of vulnerable coastline from Moa to Msasani.<sup>75</sup> Whilst this may have had some effect in checking such activities, the smuggling continued and arrests were periodically made. In 1945 reports were received of *khangas* being smuggled via Kunduchi. Five years later a gang of smugglers from Zanzibar were reported to be landing goods to the north of Dar es Salaam and running them into town by car.<sup>76</sup> In 1953 a Dar es Salaam man was arrested after being found in possession of Shs.3,363/- worth of tobacco and other contraband goods.<sup>77</sup> Unfortunately, though, thanks to both the scarcity of surviving data relating to smuggling, and to the implicitly

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<sup>72</sup> Comptroller of customs to CS, 10<sup>th</sup> January 1935, TNA/12402/Vol.1.

<sup>73</sup> Note on smuggling in Rufiji (1932), TNA/61/454.

<sup>74</sup> Comptroller of customs to Asst. Sec., 9<sup>th</sup> March 1938, TNA/12402/Vol.1.

<sup>75</sup> Comptroller to PCs, EP and Tanga, 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1938, TNA/12402/Vol.1.

<sup>76</sup> TS, 6<sup>th</sup> May 1950, p.24.

'shady' nature of the trade in contraband, it is difficult to gain much idea of its prevalence in the later colonial period. It is likely that smugglers remained at least as active in Dar es Salaam and its environs as they were before WWII. Indeed the rapidly growing urban population would have provided an ever more attractive market for the dealers in illegally imported goods, and judging by the post-war escalation in other forms of crime it is probable that the incidence of smuggling also grew. Leslie recollects the smuggling of goods to have been relatively common at the time of his survey, and whilst officials were aware of what was going on in Msasani and Kunduchi, it was not considered important enough to devote many scarce resources to its control.<sup>78</sup>

Links between Dar es Salaam and Zanzibar were also apparent in the disposal of stolen goods. According to Baker, the steamer service to Zanzibar formed 'an ideal outlet for stolen property.'<sup>79</sup> The Commissioner of Police bemoaned the difficulty of dealing with theft cases resulting from 'the proximity of Zanzibar and the facilities which are offered for transporting the proceeds of thefts and burglaries for disposal in that island, often before the theft has been reported.'<sup>80</sup> A more common means of disposal, however, was through receivers in Dar es Salaam itself. Receivers were considered to play an important role in the incidence of thefts and burglaries. In the 1927 police report it was observed that they were 'undoubtedly the instigators of a large proportion of the thefts of property by old offenders among the natives in the townships... [who] turn their attention to such articles as are likely to obtain a ready sale with the receivers.'<sup>81</sup> Three decades later, the *Standard* was attaching 'still more blame to those dregs of human society who go by the name of receivers, without whom the disposal of stolen property would be a difficult and most hazardous process for thieves.'<sup>82</sup> 'Irreparable harm is done through the dealings of receivers', complained magistrate McPhillips in 1954, 'and our prisons are full of many who would not be there but for the[m]'.<sup>83</sup>

Amongst Africans, meanwhile, resentment was voiced towards the numerous pawn-brokers that existed in the town, with whom –knowingly or otherwise- stolen property

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<sup>77</sup> QPR, Dsm Dist, 1<sup>st</sup> October-31<sup>st</sup> December 1953, TNA/90/1011/Vol.1.

<sup>78</sup> Leslie interview.

<sup>79</sup> Baker, 'Social Conditions', p.93.

<sup>80</sup> Police AR for 1926, p.54.

<sup>81</sup> Police AR for 1927, p.49.

<sup>82</sup> *TS*, 31<sup>st</sup> May 1952, p.24.

<sup>83</sup> *TS*, 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1954.



was frequently deposited. 'These shops', wrote Mary Margaret Mkambe to the Standard in 1944,

are consuming the wealth of the resident African community, encourage theft, burglary and smuggling; teach the African not to regulate his cash requirements; thus serve no useful purpose to the economic point of view and make us slaves all the way through.<sup>84</sup>

Between 1931 and 1940 the number of pawn shops increased from four to fourteen,<sup>85</sup> providing, according to Pike, a 'convenient and profitable method of getting rid of stolen goods.'<sup>86</sup> In spite of calls for pawning to be more strictly controlled from both officials<sup>87</sup> and Africans<sup>88</sup> the number of pawn shops had by the mid-fifties increased to eighteen.<sup>89</sup> All the shops were Indian-owned.

Judging by inter-war police reports it was also Indians, and to a lesser extent Arabs, who usually performed the role of out and out receiver in the 1920s and 1930s.<sup>90</sup> And as late as 1954 a magistrate observed that this 'mean, low, despicable' offence was 'one most frequently practised by those who are not natives to this country, but whose very business and livelihood receiving has become.'<sup>91</sup> As time went on though, it appears that more Africans acted as receivers. Three out of six individuals convicted of receiving in the second quarter of 1954 were African, two Indian, and one Arab.<sup>92</sup> In his notebook from the same year ASP Young records receiving information from one Mohamed Chande 'better known to the seamier side of Dar es Salaam as Kinyengu [Kinyenga?] a trader in stolen property.'<sup>93</sup> The Shark Market in Kariakoo was well known as a place where such individuals operated, auctioning clothes and other stolen items.<sup>94</sup>

Men such as Kinyengu, along with those scrap dealers not averse to accepting items of

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<sup>84</sup> Letter to *TS*, 18<sup>th</sup> November 1944, p.12.

<sup>85</sup> Amendments by Baker to 'Social Conditions', 10.1.40, TNA/18950/Vol.II.

<sup>86</sup> Pike, 'Native Affairs', p.16.

<sup>87</sup> See, for example, Pike's report; or Baker's amendments in TNA/18950/Vol.II; or for a somewhat later eg. QPR, Dsm Dist., 1<sup>st</sup> July-30<sup>th</sup> September 1954, TNA/90/1011/Vol.1.

<sup>88</sup> See, for eg., the correspondence in *TS*, 18<sup>th</sup> November 1944; or the letter from D. Mtonga, *TS*, 21<sup>st</sup> September 1946, p.9.

<sup>89</sup> Leslie, *Survey*, p.143. Whilst they continued to provide an outlet for stolen property (consciously so or otherwise), it should be stressed that the shops also performed an important legitimate role in the extension of credit to the impoverished urban populace as documented by Leslie (pp.142-147); just as they had done in working class communities in 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century England (see Emsley, *Crime*, p.169).

<sup>90</sup> There are numerous references to Asian activity in this field in the annual police reports.

<sup>91</sup> *TS*, 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1954.

<sup>92</sup> QPR, Dsm Dist., 1<sup>st</sup> April-30<sup>th</sup> June 1954, TNA/90/1011/Vol.1.

<sup>93</sup> ASP R.W. Young's Personal Duty Diary, 29<sup>th</sup> January 1954, RH/Mss.Afr.s.2293.

dubious origin, also helped create a demand for the various types of scrap available to the resourceful urban scavenger. In sentencing Ali Mwinyishehe for stealing 21lbs. of iron from the docks in 1959, the Resident Magistrate observed that 'theft of scrap iron from the yards of the East African Railways and Harbours... [was] a thriving industry from which many people make a dishonest living.' Six years earlier, a warning was passed on through the *Wakili* and *Jumbe* that a ten year sentence would be passed on anyone found guilty of stealing items from the railway 'for sale as scrap metal'; an offence which had been occurring too often close to the Ilala Police Post.<sup>95</sup> It was not successful. In 1959 a corporal in the railway police was beaten by a gang of six men who he had disturbed stealing iron from the Ilala Yard and Railways Stores,<sup>96</sup> and in the district report the following year attention was again drawn to the activities of 'scrap and metal thieves' in this vicinity.<sup>97</sup>

Other forms of scavenging occurred away from the railway. The theft of telephone wire and electrical cable, which in the 1960s and 1970s went on to become a serious problem in Dar es Salaam, was first reported in 1952, when as much as three-quarters of a mile of wire was stolen from poles in Kichwele Street.<sup>98</sup> According to a quarterly police report three years later, 'serious thefts of telephone wire were taking place', whilst a spate of thefts of stop-cocks and water meters at one time threatened the town's water supply.<sup>99</sup> The Assistant Superintendent of Police recommended that legislation be drawn up for the control of scrap metal dealers in the town. By the end of the colonial period theft of cables was beginning to assume its' post-independence prevalence. In May 1961, the *Standard* reported that over the previous two months almost eight miles of wire -ranging from heavy power conductor cable to light telephone wire, valued at more than £350- had been stolen. Theft had occurred at various places within the town; in the Cameron Road area, at Ubungo, and near the Regent Estate. 'This vandalism', an editorial observed, 'is believed to be the work of a highly organised gang, which cuts up the wire into short lengths for ease of transport and then disposes of it through scrap metal dealers, who pay

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<sup>94</sup> DC Harris to CP, 14<sup>th</sup> May 1954, TNA/540/3/91.

<sup>95</sup> Supt. EAR & H Police, Dsm, to OIC Central Police Station, (1953?), and following *Tanganazo*, TNA/540/21/8.

<sup>96</sup> *TS*, 9<sup>th</sup> May 1959, p.1.

<sup>97</sup> DAR for 1960, p.7, RH/Mss.Afr.s.937.

<sup>98</sup> *TS*, 6<sup>th</sup> September 1952.

<sup>99</sup> QPR, Dsm Dist., 1<sup>st</sup> January-31<sup>st</sup> March 1954, TNA 90/1011/Vol.1.

about 50 cents a yard - a fraction of the value of scrap copper.'<sup>100</sup> In the same editorial attention was also drawn to a recent 'similar situation when metal covers began to disappear from roads and pavements in Dar es Salaam.' The paper considered that 'unscrupulous scrap metal dealers... [were] as guilty as those who carry out the thefts.'

The activities of receivers appeared to be connected to another common form of urban crime, that of theft from the workplace. In 1938 a port official noted that 'stealing from broken packages in the Port was taking place, and that there was liaison between the thieves and certain traders.'<sup>101</sup> However, opportunistic theft was more prevalent. 'Petty theft is common in any dock area in the world,' observed Leslie, 'and this is no exception; pilfering from cargoes and from lorries is too easy to be ignored, and a man who refrained would be considered odd by his fellows.'<sup>102</sup> Whether organised or opportunistic theft from the workplace was certainly common. A newly appointed Acting Resident Magistrate was told on his appointment in 1948 that it was customary to impose harsh sentences on dockworkers found guilty of thefts in order to discourage stealing. He found, however, that severe sentences in 'no way acted as a deterrent and cases continue to come before me daily in which dock labourers and coolies are charged with stealing small articles either from ships or the custom sheds.'<sup>103</sup> Having visited the port he advised that 'much tighter control' was required in the dock area, neither the existing customs patrolmen nor the private askaris or detectives employed by the shipping companies providing sufficient surveillance.

Depredations by employees were also common outside the port. In analysing records of the Probation service in his survey, Leslie found the biggest group of all offenders were 'unskilled labourers, who usually fell from grace while loading or unloading a lorry, from which they acquired some item of cargo.'<sup>104</sup> In 1950, a railways official wrote to the Chief Secretary drawing his attention to the 'numerous thefts of consignments... and to the increase in lawlessness in and near Dar es Salaam.'<sup>105</sup> Compensation payments made by the East African Railways in January alone totalled £3,247, which exceeded the total for the whole of the previous year, and was over twice as much as the figure recorded in

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<sup>100</sup> TS, 29<sup>th</sup> May 1961, p.2.

<sup>101</sup> Mgr., Tanganyika Railways to CS, 24<sup>th</sup> March 1938, TNA/12402/Vol.1.

<sup>102</sup> Leslie, *Survey*, p.239.

<sup>103</sup> Ag. RM to Chief Justice, High Court, 7<sup>th</sup> April 1948, TNA/37512.

<sup>104</sup> Leslie, *Survey*, p.208.

1945. In the preceding half-decade, theft from the railways appears to have gradually, though inexorably, escalated, with compensation payments increasing from £1,371 in 1945 to £3,203 in 1949. Three years later, an amendment to the penal code making new provision regarding the unlawful possession of Government, railway and service stores was deemed necessary to combat the 'prevalence of thefts of railway and other public stores in the Territory'.<sup>106</sup>

Perhaps the most prevalent form of theft from the workplace was that of stealing by servants. In his 1926 report the Commissioner of Police complained of 'the natural proclivities of the native house boy for helping himself to his master's property.'<sup>107</sup> It is difficult to gauge the incidence of such thefts. Many, no doubt, went undiscovered, and even in cases where missing items were noticed it is likely that employers often declined to press charges, particularly when items stolen were of little value. Nevertheless, by 1952 as many as 70-90 cases of theft by servants were being reported to the police in Dar es Salaam each month.<sup>108</sup> 'Thefts by people holding positions of trust are widespread', complained the Resident Magistrate in sentencing Samuel bin Guli for the theft of money and clothing from his employer later the same year.<sup>109</sup> There is also evidence that professional criminals were by the 1950s -if not earlier- forging links with household domestics to gain entry into employers' houses. After a spate of burglaries in Oyster Bay in 1957 in which burglars gained entry with the use of keys, particular suspicion fell upon house servants. In round ups in the area during 'the hours of darkness' twelve servants were found in possession of keys to their employers' houses.<sup>110</sup> An earlier editorial in the Standard ascribed such offences to a 'black market' in references:

One of the greatest and most dangerous [sic] rackets at present being carried on in Dar es Salaam is that by which an African possessing good references from his employers passes these on to one or more of his friends -no doubt for some financial consideration- who in turn makes use of them when interviewing prospective employers. As soon as employment is obtained the references go back to the original owner and in nine out of ten cases the trick works.<sup>111</sup>

Professional criminals can be linked with another form of urban crime which became

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<sup>105</sup> Regional Assistant, EAR & H, to CS, 27th February 1950, TNA/20219/Vol.II.

<sup>106</sup> TS, 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1952, p.16.

<sup>107</sup> Police AR for 1926, p.37/8.

<sup>108</sup> TS, 1<sup>st</sup> March 1952, p.1.

<sup>109</sup> TS, 14<sup>th</sup> June 1952.

<sup>110</sup> Asst. CP., Dsm to CP, 5<sup>th</sup> February 1957, TNA/90/2009/Vol.1.

increasingly common in the colonial period; bicycle theft. In 1931 a correspondent to the *Standard* complained that 'bicycles cannot be left unguarded for one moment without being stolen and an assurance from the Police that there is little hope of recovering them.'<sup>112</sup> As cycle ownership grew significantly from the 1940s on, the incidence of reported bike thefts became commonplace. Between May 1946 and May 1947 155 bicycles were reported stolen in Dar es Salaam.<sup>113</sup> The following year police were recommending more care and use of padlocks 'due to the large number of cycle thefts which are occurring in Dar es Salaam.'<sup>114</sup> When the use of locks became more common, however, thieves armed themselves with sets of keys and small hacksaws.<sup>115</sup> In a letter to the *Standard* in 1954, W.N. Paul replied to another correspondent who had accused those who had cycles stolen of being careless:

I should think he tries to prove whether these are actual careless or are unfortunate to have their bicycles stolen - to do this I should kindly ask him to ride on his new cycle to such a place as the Post Office, lock it as usual and go into the Post Office for say twenty minutes and see if he will have ride on his new cycle for the homeward journey. I think he will have to foot it to the Police Station...<sup>116</sup>

In 1948 bicycle thefts in Dar es Salaam totalled 223 - over four a week. The *Standard* observed that this was a particularly high figure for a town of its size. In Mombasa, a larger town at this time, just 67 were stolen the same year.<sup>117</sup> By 1953 the number had increased to around one a day. In September that year, the Assistant Commissioner of Police announced that a special Bicycle Squad had been operating 'at the most vulnerable points in town', but that despite their efforts 'bicycles are stolen indiscriminately throughout the area.'<sup>118</sup> Three locations where bicycle thefts were particularly common were subsequently put under constant surveillance by this squad, which by the end of the year consisted of three officers and sixteen constables. They were thwarted, however, by '[t]he cunning of these thieves', which, according to the Assistant Commissioner, was 'illustrated by the fact that there has never been a report from any place which has been under supervision and as many as five trap-teams have been operating at any one time.'<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> *TS*, 5<sup>th</sup> April 1952.

<sup>112</sup> *TS*, 15<sup>th</sup> August 1931, p.7.

<sup>113</sup> *TS*, 8<sup>th</sup> September 1947.

<sup>114</sup> *TS*, 18<sup>th</sup> December 1948, p.3.

<sup>115</sup> *TS*, 24<sup>th</sup> February 1958, p.3.

<sup>116</sup> *TS*, 7<sup>th</sup> September 1954.

<sup>117</sup> *TS*, 8<sup>th</sup> January 1949, p.3.

<sup>118</sup> QPR, Dsm Dist, 1<sup>st</sup> July-30<sup>th</sup> September 1953, TNA/90/1011/Vol.1.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, 1<sup>st</sup> October-31<sup>st</sup> December 1953.

Indeed the introduction of the Bicycle Squad was actually followed by a substantial increase in the number of cycle thefts, with 487 being reported in the twelve months from October 1953. The response was an intensification in operations against known thieves - as well as 'all loiterers' at common theft sites who were 'picked up and searched for cycle stealing implements'.<sup>120</sup> Of the 81 known bicycle thieves in Dar es Salaam, the 65 not then in prison were, according to the Assistant Commissioner, 'being continuously harassed'.<sup>121</sup> And in the course of 1954 a remarkable 5,986 bicycles were checked by police to see if they were stolen - around a third of all licensed bikes in the town.<sup>122</sup> Such methods had an immediate impact. In 1955 the total number of bicycles reported stolen went down to 334, and in the first quarter of 1956 the number decreased further to just 54. As with other types of property crime in Dar es Salaam, however, after a mid-fifties respite bike thefts resumed their upward trend reaching one a day again by early 1958.<sup>123</sup>

The Dar es Salaam police had great difficulty retrieving stolen bicycles. Immediately after being stolen they were dismantled, and any remaining identifying features were obscured or removed entirely - the frame was often discarded for this reason. The wheels, handlebars, chains and other parts were untraceable and all had a ready resale value, not least amongst the capital's cycle repairers.<sup>124</sup> Indeed, such individuals were themselves not averse to obtaining their own illicit spares, as was the case with Rajabu Mohamed who in May 1955 was convicted for the third time on a charge relating to the theft of or receiving a stolen cycle.<sup>125</sup> The police were alert to such practices. In the same year, attempting to control the circulation of stolen bicycle parts, they ensured that seventeen cycle repairers were prosecuted for trading without a licence.<sup>126</sup> In other cases stolen bicycles were removed to the rural areas where their provenance was easily concealed. In one police raid at Maneromango, a village located eighty kilometres to the southwest of the capital, in 1953, seven stolen cycles were recovered.<sup>127</sup> In another raid two years later at Marogoro Shamba, seventy kilometres away in Kisarawe district, a further ten were found with their frame numbers obliterated and over-stamped with false ones.<sup>128</sup> The vast

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., 1<sup>st</sup> April-30<sup>th</sup> June 1955.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., 1<sup>st</sup> October-31<sup>st</sup> December 1954.

<sup>122</sup> In 1957 there were 15,600 bicycles licensed in Dsm. *TS*, 24<sup>th</sup> February 1958, p.3.

<sup>123</sup> *TS*, 24<sup>th</sup> February 1952, p.3.

<sup>124</sup> QPR, Dsm Dist, 1<sup>st</sup> January-31<sup>st</sup> March 1954, TNA/90/1011/Vol.1.

<sup>125</sup> *SN*, 22nd May 1955, p.5.

<sup>126</sup> QPR, Dsm Dist, 1<sup>st</sup> July-30<sup>th</sup> September 1955, TNA/90/1011/Vol.1.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid., 1<sup>st</sup> October-31<sup>st</sup> December 1953.

<sup>128</sup> *SN*, 14<sup>th</sup> August 1955, p.1.

majority of bicycles though, remained untraced.

### **Opportunists and old lags: the Dar es Salaam criminal**

As we have seen crime of all sorts was increasingly common in colonial Dar es Salaam. Little idea, though, has so far has been gleaned of the identity of the offenders. Who were the town's criminals? Where did they originate from? Were particular areas in the town associated with criminals? Did offenders turn to crime mainly at times of want? Were they opportunistic thieves? Or did crime become more organised, and individuals engage in criminal activity as a profession? Could a criminal 'class' be said to emerging in Dar es Salaam: a discrete group of organised criminals detached from the rest of urban African society as a result of their activities?

Emsley has described how, in 19<sup>th</sup> century Britain, the notion of a criminal class emerged amongst the more 'respectable' members of Victorian society. Descriptions of this class, he tells us, 'revealed an organised, hierarchical social group which lacked any understanding of religious principles, social duty and virtue – in short a group which was ignorant of the key elements that Victorians liked to think underpinned their society.'<sup>129</sup> This characterisation of the criminal element absolved respectable members of society from responsibility for the conditions that may have been causing individuals to turn to crime. It also served to marginalise the criminal. Crime was something suffered by all law-abiding members of society and was committed by an alien, maladjusted group.<sup>130</sup> Like Victorian Britain, colonial Dar es Salaam also had its criminal bogeymen. Just like their 19<sup>th</sup> century counterparts the detribalised *wahuni* were, in the colonial discourse, parasitic outsiders. Whilst they may not have been organised or hierarchical, they certainly lacked understanding of 'social duty and virtue', indeed of any of the key elements that *officials* liked to think (hoped!) underpinned *colonial* urban society. As with the Victorian class such a characterisation of this section of the urban population helped to shift responsibility –in this case away from the colonial organisation of African society- onto the shortcomings of individuals.<sup>131</sup> Whilst structural and environmental

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<sup>129</sup> Emsley, *Crime*, p.175.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, p.173.

<sup>131</sup> This is not too say that officials were unaware of the environmental and structural causes of crime also.

causes for criminal behaviour were acknowledged, such as rural-urban drift and the lack of formal employment, it was in the end the *wahuni* who were condemned for their moral weaknesses.

Recent research into crime in 19<sup>th</sup> century Britain has revealed this picture of a criminal class living outside mainstream society to be a spurious one. Rather the conclusion has been reached that in fact 'no clear distinction can be made between a dishonest criminal class and a poor but honest working class.'<sup>132</sup> It appears that the same was true of colonial Dar es Salaam. Whilst the tendency was to stigmatise one section of the population -the *wahuni*- Leslie, in the only surviving analysis of criminal records in Dar es Salaam from the British period, found that there was little to distinguish offenders from the general urban population.<sup>133</sup> The proportion of Muslim offenders was slightly larger than that of the population as a whole, pointing to coastal districts of origin for offenders, but the discrepancy was negligible; 92 per cent compared to 87 per cent. Single men were slightly more likely to turn to crime (64 per cent of offenders as against 39 per cent of the general population), although over half of those offenders in the sample considered for probation actually lived with wives, children or other relatives and two-thirds of those sentenced to imprisonment had relatives in Dar es Salaam. In analysing the length of residence of criminals it was found that those of short residence in the town provided more than their share, although overall the bulk of offenders were drawn from long-term residents. Neither was it possible to detect some distinguishing features from the work record. From the sample of nine hundred offenders a quarter had an average of under six months a job, half averaged between six months and three years a job, and a fifth averaged more than three years. Twelve per cent had no paid employment at the time of conviction. Neither length of employment nor the receipt of a better wage, Leslie observed, was a 'guarantee that a man will not succumb to the sudden temptation, often for trifling gain.'<sup>134</sup> Indeed, in reviewing the available statistics Leslie surmised that:

The rather depressing conclusion to be drawn from these figures is that there is comparatively little difference in the circumstances and background of the three classes – the recidivists, the first offenders and the general public. There is a small bias towards crime of those with rather less pay, less work, less family responsibility and less continuity;

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Indeed as explanatory factors these were given precedence.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> Leslie, *Survey*, pp.205-8.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid, p.208.



but it is a small one.<sup>135</sup>

Nor was location a guide. Leslie found just as much difficulty distinguishing criminals by area of residence as he had by social type. Some areas in the town did happen to develop an unsavoury reputation, becoming associated as the haunts of criminals. From early on Kisutu was considered a location favoured by offenders (as well as Dar es Salaam's principal red light area). The Commissioner of Police, writing in 1935 after complaints in the Indian press,<sup>136</sup> complained that

This settlement has always been a source of concern to the police, as it lies conveniently situated between the residential area and the native area and undoubtedly affords cover to thieves on their expeditions to the non-native area.

...The area has for years been under close Police supervision, particularly at night, but the only solution would be to move the settlement altogether, for until this is done, despite all the efforts of the Police, the nuisance is bound to continue.<sup>137</sup>

Unlike other African residential areas in Zone II, Kisutu escaped demolition, and continued to be known as a thieves' haven throughout the colonial period, although its' notoriety was never as pronounced as it became after independence (before finally being demolished in 1974). Going on convictions reported in the *Tanganyika Standard* in the 1950s, Buguruni was another part of town which had a larger than normal criminal element either living or operating in it. By the early 1960s it had, according to Ishumi, become known as Alabama 'on account of its long record of urban crime'.<sup>138</sup> Oral informants also remember Buguruni as having acquired a reputation as being 'quite a notorious area' in the late colonial period (not only as a result of the 1959 riot).<sup>139</sup> As a minimally policed urban 'village' on the outskirts of town, it is perhaps not surprising if Buguruni was used as a place of residence by criminals (as well as a location to pursue their illegal activities). Whilst Kisutu and Buguruni may have acquired reputations as

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<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> See *TH*, 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1935, p.6.

<sup>137</sup> CP to CS, 1<sup>st</sup> March 1935, TNA/23457.

<sup>138</sup> A.G.M. Ishumi, *The urban jobless in East Africa: a study of the unemployed population in the growing urban centres, with special reference to Tanzania*, (Uppsala, 1984) p.84. Ishumi accounts for the appellation by connecting it with civil rights unrest in southern states of the USA -including Alabama- in the 1960s. However, it is possible that Buguruni became known as Alabama rather earlier than Ishumi infers. Mwinyimvua Sultan, Amiri Mngamili and Hassan Mbwana (Interview No.5) attributed it to the late 1950s-after the violent 1959 Buguruni riot had resulted in the area acquiring a certain notoriety. Were this the case, then the possible reference to the (successful) 1955 Montgomery bus boycott in the USA imbues the appellation (now in a colonial context) with considerably greater political significance than Ishumi accounts for.

<sup>139</sup> Interview No.5.

being the haunts of criminals, however, the evidence we have is impressionistic. In his analysis of criminal records Leslie could detect 'no noticeable concentration of [offenders] in any one area of town; the proportion living in each tallied well with the figures for the whole population.'<sup>140</sup> Indeed, an indication of the general prevalence of criminality amongst Dar es Salaam's population as a whole can perhaps be gleaned from the outcome of a raid conducted in early 1958. '[O]f a total of 331 checked', the Assistant Commissioner of Police reported, 'about one third were breaking the law in some manner in an area selected at random, and without special information regarding its inhabitants.'<sup>141</sup>

Whilst it was difficult to distinguish criminals by social type from the general population, a core of repeat offenders, who appeared to have turned to crime as a profession, was present in Dar es Salaam from relatively early on. The earliest surviving statistics on recidivism amongst detainees in Dar es Salaam (from 1927)<sup>142</sup> numbers 132 recidivists out of a total of 892 convicts; a proportion of 14 per cent. Within five years the number of recidivists had risen to 337, which constituted 43 per cent of a total 780 convicts. The average percentage of recidivists in the 1930s as a whole was just under 35 per cent. Interestingly, over the following years the number of first time offenders, and those with just one previous conviction increased at a greater rate than the number of recidivists. In the first half of the 1950s the average percentage of recidivists of all those admitted to Dar es Salaam prisons was down to just 19 per cent. Even the actual number of recidivists, considering the rapid growth of both the town itself and crime within it, grew at a remarkably slow rate: the 337 of 1933 actually outnumbering the 316 admitted to Dar es Salaam's prisons twenty years later. Whilst an increasingly professional criminal class appears to have emerged by the 1950s, the vast majority of crime remained unorganised. In the final year for which statistics are available recidivists made up just 21 per cent of admissions to Ukonga prison. This relatively slight number of recidivists would have made up the hard-core of Dar es Salaam's underworld, such as it was. Whilst numerically small it was the activities of this group of hardened offenders which was the principle source of anxiety for the inhabitants and administrators of Dar es Salaam.

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<sup>140</sup> Leslie, *Survey*, p.207.

<sup>141</sup> QPR, Dsm Dist., 1<sup>st</sup> April-30<sup>th</sup> June 1958, TNA/90/1011/Vol.1.

<sup>142</sup> Dar es Salaam (and later Mbasani and Ukonga) was the main prison for all coastal districts in Eastern

*Table 4.1 Recidivism amongst admissions to Dar es Salaam prison 1927-1938*

	1927	1929*	1930	1932	1933	1935	1936	1937	1938
Recidivists	132	89	178	337	270	255	247	451	391
Total convicted	892	638	722	780	626	832	969	1143	1053
% Recidivists	14.79	13.94	24.65	43.2	43.13	30.64	25.49	39.45	37.13

\* Figures for 1928, 1931 and 1934 unavailable

Source: Prisons Dept. ARs

*Table 4.2 Recidivism amongst admissions to Dar es Salaam, Msasani (from 1944) and Ukonga prisons (from 1952), Dar es Salaam 1939-1960*

	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946
First timers	724	756	808	608	594	800	556	783
Non-recidivists	84	53	130	192	162	178	113	130
Recidivists	296	370	299	164	154	167	197	370
Total admissions	1104	1179	1237	964	910	1145	866	1283
% Recidivists	26.81	31.38	24.17	17.01	16.92	14.58	22.74	28.83

	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954
First timers	871	754	689	1100	1169	1072	1358	1369
Non-recidivists	162	100	136	173	282	362	466	571
Recidivists	385	274	298	384	281	316	358	447
Total admissions	1418	1128	1123	1657	1732	1750	2182	2387
% Recidivists	27.15	24.29	26.53	23.17	16.22	18.05	16.42	18.72

	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960
First timers	1170	855	2302	2344	1656	887
Non-recidivists	453	473	813	784	509	409
Recidivists	445	356	575	670	614	662
Total admissions	2068	1684	3690	3798	2779	1958
% Recidivists	21.51	21.14	15.58	17.64	22.09	33.81

\* For imprisonment

\*\* Ordinary

\*\*\* Star

Source: Prisons Dept. ARs

That there were professional criminals in Dar es Salaam was apparent from the earliest years of British rule. On several occasions between the wars the simultaneous release of a number of ex-convicts was held to be responsible for a mini wave of housebreaking in the capital. Discharged convicts, complained the Commissioner of Police in 1926,

come out of gaol one day, and immediately return to crime. Prison life in the territory is absolutely no deterrent to the criminal. The discharge of a batch of criminals from gaol usually synchronises with a wave of burglary, which continues until the whole gang are back in prison. Orders are passed by the courts... for these habitual criminals to report their addresses to the Police for a given term, on discharge from prison, but this does not prevent them returning to crime and to prison. It merely enables the police to locate them quicker...<sup>143</sup>

The situation was exacerbated by prisoners from the rural part of the district staying in the capital on release from prison.<sup>144</sup> Attempts were made to prevent ex-convicts remaining in Dar es Salaam. It was not always a straightforward matter, however. 'Machinery is provided', the Commissioner observed in his 1926 report, 'for repatriating such persons to their homes and such action is invariably taken by the prison authorities, but it is surprising how many of the habitual criminals belong to the towns and are detribalised.'

At least the small numbers involved in serious crime meant that the situation in Dar es Salaam was containable. The recidivism rates appeared to confirm that the control of a relatively small number of hardened criminals was the key to crime prevention. This was borne out for the Superintendent of Police in the early 1940s, who ascribed the reduction of reported crime at this time in part to '[t]he successful conviction before High Court of an appreciable number of old offenders, who are the instigators of crime, which has been a marked achievement during the past year.'<sup>145</sup> By the mid-1950s a system of supervision was in place in which known criminals had to report daily to a local police station (mostly to Msimbazi station), although this regime was insufficiently strict for the Assistant Commissioner who argued for a night-time curfew for all supervisees.<sup>146</sup> The numbers reporting to police were relatively modest; between 26 and 43 in 1954/55.<sup>147</sup> According to the Assistant Commissioner these constituted 'the hard core of the criminal

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Province, including Dar es Salaam itself.

<sup>143</sup> Police AR for 1926, pp.57/8; see also 1928, p.18.

<sup>144</sup> AO, Kisarawe to PC, EP, 27<sup>th</sup> October 1943, TNA/540/3/46.

<sup>145</sup> Supt., Dsm to PC, EP, 15<sup>th</sup> February 1943, TNA/61/3/XVII.

<sup>146</sup> QPR, Dsm Dist., 1<sup>st</sup> July-30<sup>th</sup> September 1954, TNA/90/1011/Vol.1.

<sup>147</sup> See QPRs, *ibid*.

element'.<sup>148</sup> Whilst, at any one time, the number of supervisees was small there was a relatively high degree of re-convictions. In the first quarter of 1955, for example, 11 of the 43 persons being supervised returned to prison. It is perhaps easier to get a grasp of the activities of this 'hard core' by turning to examples of individual cases.

An impression of the criminal careers of some persistent offenders can be gleaned from the *Dar es Salaam* press, and from official sources. As early as 1922, for example, the *Dar es Salaam Times* reported the conviction –for housebreaking and stealing- of one Musa bin Hassani. In the short period of British rule up till then, he had already acquired three previous convictions.<sup>149</sup> Two years later, the same paper was reporting a seven year sentence received by Mahomed bin Mursal for housebreaking, theft and assault. Mursal had acquired six previous convictions under British rule.<sup>150</sup> The police report of 1927 recorded the arrest of another persistent offender who had an inter-territorial range of activity:

Ali bin Sefu was arrested at Tanga in December. This man had been convicted previously of five housebreakings. He broke out of prison in Zanzibar, made his way to Dar es Salaam, thence to Tanga, and at both places committed several burglaries. He was very pluckily arrested at night carrying a loaded revolver, by a native constable and property to the value of Shs2,200/- was recovered.<sup>151</sup>

The most notorious of inter-war criminals was Omari bin Masua, a Bajuni who made his way to Dar es Salaam from his home district of Mombasa. He was first singled out by the *Tanganyika Herald* –described as an 'old convict'- in November 1932, after his escape from jail and his subsequent recapture with his fellow prisoner, Juma bin Mohammed. He had been awaiting trial on charges of resisting arrest and attempting to stab an *askari*, although a subsequent report in the *Herald* noted that he was also 'alleged to have committed a number of burglaries'.<sup>152</sup> Six months later Masua escaped once again and committed at least two fresh burglaries before being re-arrested at Kilwa Kisiwani, the former slaving town on the southern Tanganyika coast. 'It will be a matter of great relief to the public and authorities concerned', commented the *Herald*, 'that the

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<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*, 1<sup>st</sup> January-31<sup>st</sup> March 1955.

<sup>149</sup> *DT*, 9<sup>th</sup> September 1922, p.9.

<sup>150</sup> *DT*, 13<sup>th</sup> September 1924.

<sup>151</sup> Police AR for 1927, p.42.

<sup>152</sup> *TH* 8<sup>th</sup> November 1932, p.6 and 24<sup>th</sup> December 1932, p.9.

dangerous convict Omari bin Masua... has been re-arrested.'<sup>153</sup> Later that year he was tried and convicted on four counts; entry into a King's African Rifles officers' house, two counts of theft, and escape from jail, receiving six months for each charge, which brought the time he had to serve up to ten years.<sup>154</sup> Just 18 months into his incarceration, though, Masua, to the apparent delight of sections of the African population, had escaped once again, this time with his fellow prisoner, Hamisi bin Bakari (aka Hamisi bin Kiko - described as a Manyema or Zaramo from Dar es Salaam).<sup>155</sup> 'Last night the town was terror-stricken', wrote the editor of the *Tanganyika Herald* with characteristic melodrama, '[i]t will remain so until Omari bin Masua has been recaptured.'<sup>156</sup> Masua was declared 'Public Enemy No. 1' and considerable police resources were devoted to his recapture. The African community of Dar es Salaam was said to be abuzz with rumours about his whereabouts and future movements.<sup>157</sup> Three detachments of police were engaged in the pursuit of the escaped felons, who travelled north through Bagamoyo and Tanga districts.<sup>158</sup> In early March, Masua turned up in Mombasa. Reportedly 'well-known' to the police there, a European and an Arab(?) officer had recognised him walking down a central street in the town and attempted to effect his arrest. Masua responded violently, knifing Sub-Inspector Abdalla Said in the face, before making good his escape. Shs.300/- was offered for information leading to his arrest. According to the *Mombasa Times*, however, Masua once again 'vanished into thin air'.<sup>159</sup> He moved further north still, to Kismayu in Somaliland. Here he was apprehended in mid-April by the Italian authorities. Once again Masua got the better of his captors. 'Like love,' declared the *Tanganyika Standard* in the wake of his latest escape, 'Omari laughs at locksmiths.'<sup>160</sup> It was not until the following month that Masua's peregrinations of the East African littoral were finally ended, when he was wounded in a shoot-out with Italian police after being caught breaking into a European house in Kismayu.<sup>161</sup>

It is not clear to what extent Masua was, in his sphere of activity, representative of a wider group of criminals operational along the Swahili coast. Both he and Ali bin Sefu

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<sup>153</sup> *TH*, 5<sup>th</sup> June 1933, p.11.

<sup>154</sup> *TH*, 19<sup>th</sup> August 1933, p.4.

<sup>155</sup> *TS*, 26<sup>th</sup> Jan. 1935, p.19.

<sup>156</sup> *TH*, 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1935, p.3.

<sup>157</sup> *TH*, 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1935, p.3.

<sup>158</sup> *TH*, 9<sup>th</sup> February 1935, pp. 3 & 10; *TS*, 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1935, p.3.

<sup>159</sup> *TS*, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1935.

<sup>160</sup> *TS*, 20<sup>th</sup> April 1935.

<sup>161</sup> *TS*, 4<sup>th</sup> May 1935, p.20.

obviously travelled widely in pursuit of criminal opportunities. Meanwhile, the 1926 police report complained that 'the difficulties in the way of intercepting... stolen property are insuperable, as the thieves travel by *Dhows* and often from ports other than Dar es Salaam.' Experienced criminals on the Swahili coast were clearly willing and able to relocate when a particular town got 'too hot'. Criminals who operated inter-territorially were probably uncommon. However, the activities of Masua and Sefu indicate the presence of a criminal type who was the source of particular anxiety to non-Africans in Dar es Salaam, officials and settlers alike.

By the second half of the British colonial period the arrests and convictions of offenders with substantial criminal records were being reported. In November 1942, Hamisi bin Punje (alias Mohammed bin Omari) was given a seven year sentence for breaking into the house of a European police officer. This brought the total number of years to which he had been sentenced to imprisonment between 1918 and 1942 to thirty three.<sup>162</sup> Issa bin Abdallah (alias Selemani bin Abdallah), convicted of burglary and stealing in 1957, had an equally long criminal career, with a list of previous convictions which ran 'almost continuously' from 1935 to 1956.<sup>163</sup> Similarly Hassani Abdullah, convicted on five charges of 'highway robberies' in 1960, was found to have previous convictions stretching back to the 1940s.<sup>164</sup> Not only were criminals with long records emerging, but also prolific thieves were being uncovered and apprehended. Two ex-offenders -reporting to the police as supervisees- who were re-convicted in early 1953 had sixteen and fourteen previous convictions each.<sup>165</sup> In August 1960, Juma Saidi, received a 21 year sentence for the grand total of 35 offences in the Oyster Bay area of Dar es Salaam.<sup>166</sup> Six years earlier, the 'notorious thief' Augustino Yusif had been prolific enough for a noticeable reduction in the number of breakings in the town to have been attributed to his arrest.<sup>167</sup>

In addition to rates of recidivism, a further measure of the degree to which crime becomes professionalised is the extent of co-operation between criminals. In the case of Dar es Salaam, it is noteworthy that organised crime was at an extremely low level

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<sup>162</sup> TS, 27<sup>th</sup> November 1942, p.8

<sup>163</sup> TS, 29<sup>th</sup> March 1957.

<sup>164</sup> TS, 9<sup>th</sup> September 1960.

<sup>165</sup> QPR, Dsm Dist., 1<sup>st</sup> October-31<sup>st</sup> December 1953, TNA/90/1011/Vol.1.

<sup>166</sup> TS, 27<sup>th</sup> August 1960.

throughout the colonial period, criminals tending to operate singly or in pairs, although (tellingly) this appeared to be changing towards the end of the period when gang activity seems to have become much more common. In the earliest years of British rule, during the outbreak of criminality after WWI, there is evidence of criminals collaborating in their activities. In 1921, the *Dar es Salaam Times* was noting 'a strong desire on the part of the authorities to stamp out gangs of thieves which have been so active of late'.<sup>168</sup> The degree of organisation involved, however, was not high; in the one case to be reported by the press, the supposed gang was composed of just three people. Before WWII serious gang activity made its only appearance in Dar es Salaam in 1931, when an armed gang of four robbed an Indian merchant house making off with valuable jewellery and Shs.4,500/- in cash (see above). One reason to which the lack of organised crime was attributed was selective use of the township rule which enabled the police and district officials to repatriate undesirables. This was repeatedly singled out in annual police reports. In 1939, for example, it was described as being 'of great value and very materially assists in preventing the formation of criminal gangs within the township of Dar es Salaam.'<sup>169</sup> That repatriations were so few at this time gives some indication of the scarcity of serious criminals in the town prior to 1939.<sup>170</sup>

It was not until after WWII that more widespread and serious gang activity in Dar es Salaam began to be recorded. It was most prominent -in the form of petty crime- in the vicinity of Mnazi Mmoja, which by this time had become a rather notorious area thanks to the predatory activities of loosely organised groups of muggers (see above). Meanwhile, a greater degree of co-operation in house- and shopbreakings was also beginning to emerge. Three gangs of housebreakers operating in the Oyster Bay area were reported to have been broken up by the police in 1953.<sup>171</sup> An increase of 170 breakings in the last quarter of 1954 was attributed to the actions of numerous small gangs. 'Every effort', the Assistant Commissioner of Police reported, 'is being made to exterminate these gangs.'<sup>172</sup> The following quarter he was able to record nine convictions resulting from police infiltration of gangs, although by its very success this method of

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<sup>167</sup> QPR, Dsm Dist., 1<sup>st</sup> July-30<sup>th</sup> September 1954, TNA/90/1011/Vol.1.

<sup>168</sup> *DT*, 21<sup>st</sup> May 1921, p.4.

<sup>169</sup> Police AR for 1939.

<sup>170</sup> Up to the early 1940s repatriation legislation was mostly used against criminals.

<sup>171</sup> QPR, Dsm Dist., 1<sup>st</sup> July-30<sup>th</sup> September, TNA/90/1011/Vol.1.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, 1<sup>st</sup> October-31<sup>st</sup> December 1954.



policing had subsequently been ruled out for the foreseeable future.<sup>173</sup> Intensified police activity, however, was failing to prevent a trend towards more organised crime, which by the final years of colonial rule appears to have reached a peak. In 1960 the Commissioner of Police bemoaned the increase in motorised gangs. Meanwhile, towards the end of the 1950s, reports on the activities of armed gangs were increasingly to be found in the pages of the colonial press. In 1959, the *Standard* reported that a woman was fatally injured by a gang armed with *pangas* in the course of a housebreaking in Kinondoni.<sup>174</sup> The following year, in Ubungo, an Arab was stabbed in the course of a raid on his *duka* by a gang of Africans. In the preceding six weeks eleven such attacks had taken place on Arab shops on the outskirts of town.<sup>175</sup> The leader of one of these gangs was sentenced to a total of sixty seven years in April 1961, having been convicted on thirty three charges relating to a series of raids on shops in Dar es Salaam, Kisarawe and Morogoro. In each case:

The gang surrounded the shop at night all armed with *pangas*, swords or knives. Watchmen or villagers who tried to intervene had torches flashed in their faces to prevent identification of the gang or they were chased away (sometimes with violence).

The shop doors were then battered in and the occupants threatened with death and bodily harm so as to induce them to hand over all the money and jewellery on the premises.<sup>176</sup>

The wide sphere of operation of this gang was another indication of the increasing sophistication of criminals in Tanganyika. Increasingly criminals switched areas of activity as circumstances allowed. The District Commissioner of Bagamoyo in 1941, for example, blamed a crime-wave on a number of recidivists 'who have made Dar es Salaam or Zanzibar too hot for themselves and who spend a while in Bagamoyo picking up easy money.'<sup>177</sup> Similarly, two years later, the Ruvu and Kikonga sisal estates, situated just to the east of the capitol, were identified as being used as havens by criminals from Dar es Salaam.<sup>178</sup> Indeed, the Ruvu minor settlement and nearby Ngeta Kikonga were somewhat notorious locations in themselves, singled out by a district official two years earlier as 'one of the worst areas in the district from the point of view of crime'.<sup>179</sup> Ruvu was home to receivers of stolen property and also served as headquarters to one or two

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<sup>173</sup> Ibid., 1<sup>st</sup> January-31<sup>st</sup> March 1955.

<sup>174</sup> *TS*, 25<sup>th</sup> February 1959, p.1.

<sup>175</sup> *TS*, 14<sup>th</sup> September 1960, p.1.

<sup>176</sup> *TS*, 7<sup>th</sup> April 1961, p.3.

<sup>177</sup> DC Bagamoyo to PC, EP, 13<sup>th</sup> May 1941, TNA/61/688/5.

<sup>178</sup> DC, Dsm to SP, Dsm, 28<sup>th</sup> July 1944, TNA/540/21/8..

gangs led, according to the official, by 'such well known criminals' as Idi Mwinyikondo (alias Idi Benafiri) and his brother Mzee Mwinyikondo (or Benafiri).<sup>180</sup> It is highly likely that these Ruvu gangs were linked to criminal activity occurring in the capital. It is equally likely that they were implicated in crime associated with the central railway line which passed through Ruvu. The presence of professional pickpockets there, using Ruvu as a base whilst they 'worked' the passenger trains, was commented upon by the Provincial Commissioner in 1942.<sup>181</sup> Eight years later, a Dar es Salaam railways official wrote complaining of 'the numerous thefts of consignments from wagons en route from Dar es Salaam to up-country stations'.<sup>182</sup> He reported the activities of an organised gang armed with firearms operating in the district, stealing goods from trains. Thirteen persons were arrested in connection with one incident in January 1950, four of whom were railway employees. In October that year, a further series of burglaries along the railway line culminated in the death of a Khoja railway official.<sup>183</sup> Another instance of the criminal links being forged between Dar es Salaam and its hinterland was the trade in stolen bicycles discussed above.

### **Gamblers and tricksters**

Alongside more serious criminals the urban economy was also fruitful ground for those who sought to profit from their fellow townsmen's recklessness and/or gullibility. Professional gamblers were particularly common. Card games were popular amongst Dar es Salaam's African population. A modest profit on the part of the professional gamester was probably considered an acceptable price by his customers for the provision of entertainment and the chance of a windfall. In addition, informal gambling 'clubs' existed without the input of professionals. On the other hand, it appears there were many gamblers who used their skills in this area to yield a dishonest profit, whose deceptions would have been condemned by all sections of the community. Dar es Salaam's police failed to make this distinction, though, taking action against all forms of gambling indiscriminately.

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<sup>179</sup> Political, Kisarawe to Political, Dsm, 12<sup>th</sup> March 1942 TNA/540/21/8..

<sup>180</sup> ADO, Kisarawe to DC, Uzaramo, 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1942, TNA/540/21/8.

<sup>181</sup> PC, EP to Crime, Dsm, 16<sup>th</sup> February 1942, TNA/540/21/8.

<sup>182</sup> Regional Assistant, EAR & H to CS, 27<sup>th</sup> February 1950, TNA/20219/Vol.II.

<sup>183</sup> PAR for 1950.

Gambling, as the Commissioner of Police observed in 1923, was 'very rife in the towns among the native population.'<sup>184</sup> Games of 'find the lady', known in Swahili as *karata tatu* (tr. three cards) or, alternatively, *kuona Mzungu* (tr. find the European), were played quite openly all over town, including the Indian areas. Less common was *nje ndani* (literal tr. outside inside) in which stakes of Shs.2/-, Shs.5/- or even Shs.10/- were placed on top of cards - to be won by the customer who selected the correct one.<sup>185</sup> In 1934, the *Herald* commented on the prevalence of gambling in Zone II:

The Indian bazaar has again become gambler ridden. Yesterday afternoon a gang of native gamblers playing the three card game was seen in Market Street. It is reported that this gang is in the habit of roaming about in the bazaar and of choosing any place for their business, sometimes even before the eyes of the police. This is not only a nuisance but a menace to the public moral [sic]. In some places they are surrounded by Native and Indian children offering them temptation to get rich quick. That they can do so in broad daylight calls for explanation from the Police.<sup>186</sup>

Gambling took place most commonly in the African areas, though. Three card tricksters were a frequent sight in the nooks and crannies of Kariakoo; even on street corners there.<sup>187</sup> Jangwani became particularly well-known for its *karata tatu* stands, located to take advantage of the large numbers of people working in the area.<sup>188</sup> There were also stands operating on Mnazi Mmoja and in Gerezani.<sup>189</sup> In addition, gambling occurred in informal 'schools', as described by Leslie in his 1957 survey:

Many of these groups [labour gangs] re-form in the evening into clubs, or 'schools', where small-scale gambling takes place, for penny points, on *bao*, snakes and ladders, dominoes, or cards. Particularly these clubs are used by those who are paid daily or by the job, for they have ready money. The sums lost or gained are not large, and often the rule is that a man who loses must drop out to give another his turn, thus curtailing still more his losses.<sup>190</sup>

Attempts to control 'professional' gamblers were usually foiled by a well organised system of look-outs.<sup>191</sup> 'It is not often', complained the Commissioner of Police, 'that the gamblers give the police the opportunity of catching them playing for gain in a public

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<sup>184</sup> Police AR for 1923, p.26.

<sup>185</sup> Interview No.7; see also *TS*, 8<sup>th</sup> June 1946, p.12.

<sup>186</sup> *TH*, 13<sup>th</sup> January 1934, p.10.

<sup>187</sup> Leslie interview.

<sup>188</sup> Interviews Nos.1 & 7.

<sup>189</sup> Letter from SJDW, *TS*, 16<sup>th</sup> February 1950; and Interview No.1.

<sup>190</sup> Leslie, *Survey*, p.101.

<sup>191</sup> Police AR for 1927, p.60.

place.<sup>192</sup> 'They weren't easily caught', recalled Masudi Ali of *karata tatu* operators at Jangwani, 'as they always kept an eye out for the police and fled if they saw them.'<sup>193</sup> Nevertheless, repeated attempts were made to apprehend offenders throughout the colonial period. In 1923, the Commissioner reported that 'the police have been able to increase their activities against this vice, and there has been a substantial increase in the number of convictions obtained.'<sup>194</sup> Three years later, when gambling was said to be 'noticeably on the increase in the larger towns', police were 'constantly rounding up groups of natives for gambling.'<sup>195</sup> If gamblers were periodically removed from the streets, though, it was never long before they returned. Once again, in 1935, the Commissioner reported it was necessary for there to be 'determined vigilance on the part of the police to put a stop to this nuisance'.<sup>196</sup> Such actions had the support of elements amongst Dar es Salaam's African population. In 1936 the president of the Tanganyika African Commercial and Welfare Association wrote to the Provincial Commissioner complaining of the situation in the town:

[T]he gambling of three cards in Dar es Salaam streets by Africans is immensely growing, as such the association is being requested to make a very strong representations [sic] to you that if the malefactors are expelled from Dar es Salaam to their own countries, the offences would diminish considerably.<sup>197</sup>

The Provincial Commissioner responded by pointing out the difficulty police had in controlling 'three card tricksters' and requesting TAWCA assistance 'in this matter by reporting any flagrant offenders as and when they become known to it.'<sup>198</sup> The difficulties in apprehending offenders remained, however. In 1945 the District Commissioner recommended that the powers of the headmen ought to be increased in order 'to put a stop to such evils as gambling, which now takes place openly, the police force being quite inadequate to cope with it.'<sup>199</sup> By the mid-1950s gamblers had become one of the prime targets of the *wahuni* raids which were carried out with increasing intensity as the years passed and the African urban population burgeoned. In a series of such raids carried out over one week in June 1952, twenty nine people were 'found

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<sup>192</sup> Police AR for 1923, p.26.

<sup>193</sup> Interview No.7.

<sup>194</sup> Police AR for 1923, p.26.

<sup>195</sup> Police AR for 1927, p.60.

<sup>196</sup> Police AR for 1935, p.13.

<sup>197</sup> TAWCA (E. Fiah) to PC, EP, 31<sup>st</sup> March 1936, TNA/22444.

<sup>198</sup> PC, EP to TAWCA, 4<sup>th</sup> April 1936, TNA/22444.

<sup>199</sup> Uzaramo DAR for 1946, p.9, TNA/61/504/1/46.

gambling in the back streets and the open spaces.<sup>200</sup> Of these two were escaped prisoners and twelve had previous convictions.

Controlling gaming in the town was considered an indirect form of controlling other forms of crime. According to the Commissioner, gambling losses were 'responsible for a good deal of the thieving which goes on in the towns, as the victimized natives seek to recoup themselves by such means.'<sup>201</sup> A 1945 letter to the *Liwali* from one Saidi bin Selemani -complaining of gambling taking place at Mahiwa Street- quickly found its way via the District Office to the Dar es Salaam police accompanied with the observation that: 'The money used by these people for the proceeds of gambling, may well be the proceeds of thefts and their dwellings might bear searching.'<sup>202</sup> Action subsequently taken in this case, though, only resulted in convictions on charges of gambling. Five years later, after a spate of robberies at Mkunguni Street had been reported in the press, one correspondent to the *Standard* implicated the 'many ne'er-do-wells' who frequented the gambling stands on Mnazi Mmoja.<sup>203</sup> Concern was also expressed about the corrupting effect of gambling on juveniles. In 1932 twelve children aged 16 or under were picked up for gambling in the street.<sup>204</sup> Pike in his 1939 report on Native affairs in the township expressed his anxiety at the number of 14-18 year olds spending their most impressionable years with 'loafers, petty thieves and card sharpers.'<sup>205</sup> Such concern was not confined to colonial officials. In 1936 Erica Fiah wrote to the Provincial Commissioner complaining that gamesters were 'at present attracting school boys to follow their bad evils.'<sup>206</sup>

In addition to card-sharps, other types of con-men or tricksters preyed upon the urban population. It was observed in the 1928 police report that 'cheating' was 'considerably on the increase, not only among the non-native community but among the more enlightened coast natives who practise at the expense of their less wide-awake brethren from the hinterland.' The 'plan of campaign' of one such individual was

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<sup>200</sup> *TS*, 21<sup>st</sup> June 1952, p.11.

<sup>201</sup> Police AR for 1927, p.60.

<sup>202</sup> Letter from Saidi bin Selemani to the *Liwali*, 5<sup>th</sup> February 1945, and accompanying notes, TNA/540/21/8.

<sup>203</sup> Letter from SJDW, *TS*, 16<sup>th</sup> February 1950.

<sup>204</sup> Annual Return, 1932, in TNA/21522.

<sup>205</sup> Pike, 'Native Affairs', p.9.

<sup>206</sup> TAWCA to PC, EP, 31<sup>st</sup> March 1936, TNA/22444.

to ingratiate himself with some unsophisticated African traveller at Dar es Salaam railway station and undertake to purchase his ticket for him. In return for the money the accused would hand over a previously used ticket, see his dupe on the train and decamp.<sup>207</sup>

Oral informants also recalled tricksters operating at the expense of newly arrived rural immigrants, bus stands being a favoured haunt.<sup>208</sup> In one case from 1957, for which records survive, Abdallah bin Ali was convicted of cheating Soga bin Kobezi, a recent arrival from Mwanza. Ali had claimed that with Shs.40/- to give to the clerk at his office he could get Kobezi a permanent, well-paid job. Kobezi, it was reported, waited a long time at Msimbazi, but after taking the money and purportedly going to see his clerk Ali failed to return!<sup>209</sup> Abdallah bin Ali was an old hand. Two decades earlier the same individual had been convicted for cheating a man out of Shs.15/50, for which he served an eight month term of imprisonment. It was noted at the time that he already had five previous convictions of a similar nature.<sup>210</sup>

People were often duped by fraudsters posing as public officials. In 1939, the Information Officer told the Chief Secretary that “*askaris*” or more probably individuals impersonating *askaris* or government messengers waylay the simpler of the peasantry on the roads leading to the townships and levy toll of the produce which they are bringing to sell.<sup>211</sup> Thirteen years later, an announcement was necessary to warn householders and employers of labour to ascertain that tax-clerks doing the rounds were genuine, as there had been at least one successful attempt made by a fake collector to obtain money from a houseboy.<sup>212</sup> Meanwhile, in 1959, Saidi Mohamed Magongo, posing as a municipal official, levied from Shs.50/- to Shs.100/- per plot from some Africans building huts in Dar es Salaam.<sup>213</sup> The same individual collected sales fees from *pombe* vendors operating illegally from their homes, who perhaps thought they had regularised their business through the payment. Magongo was said to have accumulated considerable sums of money through his deceptions.

Con-men did not restrict their activities to Africans. In 1952, the Standard reported the

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<sup>207</sup> Police AR for 1928, p.19.

<sup>208</sup> Interview No.2.

<sup>209</sup> Native Court Case record, 11<sup>th</sup> November 1957, TNA/540/3/38B.

<sup>210</sup> Record from 1936 in TNA/20219/Vol.II.

<sup>211</sup> Information Officer to CS, 6<sup>th</sup> October 1939, TNA27565.

<sup>212</sup> TS, 23<sup>rd</sup> August 1952, p.5.

conviction of John bin Ngawagala for obtaining money by false pretences from five separate Europeans, including a secretariat official and A.M. Dyer, the District Commissioner of Dar es Salaam! He was apprehended after subsequently approaching R.H. Gower, Dyer's counterpart in Kisarawe. Ngawagala had nine previous convictions relating to activities in Iringa, Tanga and Dar es Salaam.

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<sup>213</sup> Ndewa Saleh Asumani to MS, 26<sup>th</sup> August 1959, TNA/540/DC/3/3.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Social crime in colonial Dar es Salaam**

[T]ax defaulters... together with a large number of men (and some women) who break the licensing laws, and other batches who wander without permit outside the reserve, or break the by-laws that govern agriculture, health and employment, constitute a large body of petty offenders, for whom imprisonment must in the last resort be used. They are not criminals, and their consciences are untroubled. They are just unwary pawns in the game.<sup>1</sup>

Much criminal activity in Dar es Salaam arose from the apparent incongruity of colonial legislation. Laws and by-laws that prohibited customary activities such as the tapping of palm trees, which without a permit was disallowed, or a mendicant's right to beg in a society which retained alms-giving traditions, were widely disregarded, as were laws restricting the freedom of movement. To colonial officials these activities were held to be contaminating the town. To Africans it was simply a matter of 'getting by'. Some of these 'social' crimes form the subject of this chapter.

### **Alcohol and order in Dar es Salaam**

One particularly prominent area in which colonial law clashed with African notions of legitimacy were the regulations controlling the production and consumption of alcohol. The illicit trade in 'native liquor' was a highly remunerative one, and these restrictive regulations were routinely ignored by both producers who brewed and sold alcohol illegally, and by the consumers who preferred these outlets to those which were licensed and supervised by the state.

A variety of regulations controlled the production and consumption of alcohol from the arrival of the British in Dar es Salaam during WWI. Initially brewing had been allowed for personal use alone and not for sale. In 1921, though, it was alleged that under such a regime 'drunkenness was rife amongst Africans' and in an attempt to restrict



consumption the decision was made to permit the sale of *pombe* –African beer made by fermenting sorghum, bananas, or various other grains and fruits- in licensed premises only, and to prohibit liquor production elsewhere.<sup>2</sup> By the end of the year ten premises in the African quarter had received licences to engage in the production and sale of *pombe*. This system, however, proved to be equally undesirable to British officials, who hankered for Government to ‘take an active part in the direct control of the liquor traffic in town... by the establishment of a single compound for the manufacture of beer’ along the lines of ‘native beer compounds’ in South Africa.<sup>3</sup> So, in May 1926, the production, sale and consumption of ‘native beer’ was forbidden anywhere other than the Kariakoo *pombe* market ‘under the immediate supervision of the police’.<sup>4</sup> Within Dar es Salaam itself, officials congratulated themselves on the more efficient surveillance and control of the trade in alcohol which had done much ‘to reduce the drunkenness and disorderliness which once was not uncommon in privately-owned licensed premises.’<sup>5</sup> One immediate result, however, was ‘that the native residents... wandered to outside *pombe* markets so as to escape from the exacting supervision to which, under the Native Liquor Ordinance, they were subjected in the *pombe* markets of the townships.’<sup>6</sup> Africans commonly left Dar es Salaam on Saturday night after the termination of their urban *ngoma*<sup>7</sup> in order to continue them outside the town boundary -where the restrictive urban laws relating to alcohol didn’t apply- returning on Monday mornings, often ‘much the worse for liquor’ according to a disapproving Provincial Commissioner.<sup>8</sup> Bars servicing discontented urban residents fringed the township at Kinondoni, Kigogo, Segerea, Mwali, Temeke, Chang’ombe, Buguruni and Keko.<sup>9</sup> Whilst the majority of these bars, being outside the township boundary were technically legal (the exceptions being those bars located in Keko, a popular destination for African imbibers within the boundary), they undermined attempts by officials to order the social life of urban Africans. Accordingly, the Native Liquor Ordinance was extended to cover the whole district in 1940.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Paterson, ‘Report’, p.2.

<sup>2</sup> DAR for 1921, p.22, TNA/54.3.

<sup>3</sup> PC Brett to CS, 21<sup>st</sup> June 1927, TNA/10491.

<sup>4</sup> Police AR for 1927, p.52/3.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Police AR for 1928, p.21.

<sup>7</sup> *Ngoma* were celebratory gatherings –often competitive- involving drumming and dancing.

<sup>8</sup> Chief Insp., CID to SP, Dsm, 25.8.30, TNA 61/76 (and Ag.PC, EP to CS, 12<sup>th</sup> August 1930, TNA/61/76).

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> GN No.102 of 1940.

Within Dar es Salaam itself prior to 1940, the illegal production and sale of alcohol continued to occur. When East African Breweries took over responsibility for all legally produced 'native beer' in the township in the mid-1930s, it was noted by one secretariat official that '[t]he illicit brewing of probably better beer has continued to flourish.'<sup>11</sup> Four years later an editorial by Erica Fiah in *Kwetu* announced that '[a]t present in Dar es Salaam many persons are arrested and fined being found in possession of *Kangara* liquor'<sup>12</sup> made by Natives in houses privately'.<sup>13</sup> The Police, the editorial observed, 'were in great difficulties to stop such contraband.' Meanwhile, it is also most probable that the tapping of *tembo* (palm wine), both for personal use as well as sale, was widespread in the town, although no records of any prosecutions survive. Restrictions on the consumption and sale of *tembo* were widely resented. The 'prohibition of tapping cocoa-nut [sic] trees', complained the President of the African Association to the District Officer in 1934, 'is one of the enormous scourges in the history of the Tanganyika Coast.'<sup>14</sup> 'So far as I know', he continued, 'Opium and *Bhang* are the only noxious drugs condemned by the majority of Africans'. Awareness amongst officials of the customary consumption of *tembo* in coastal societies may in fact have led to a relative tolerance being adopted towards its unlicensed tapping and consumption in Dar es Salaam.<sup>15</sup> Whilst serving as District Officer for Tanga, E.C. Baker had come to the conclusion that 'prohibition or no, *tembo* will be drunk by young and old alike no matter how severely offenders are punished.'<sup>16</sup> Still, it is clear from the comments of the African Association President, and others,<sup>17</sup> that Africans in Dar es Salaam and other coastal towns by no means felt at liberty to freely indulge their taste for palm wine. Indeed, whilst the illicit *tembo* trade in Dar es Salaam had by 1937 been allowed to grow to such an extent that it was seriously affecting business at the Kariakoo *pombe* market, the following year saw a crackdown by the police and the native administration aimed at checking the consumption of *tembo* in the town and its environs.<sup>18</sup>

Restrictions governing African consumption of alcohol proved unsustainable,

<sup>11</sup> Sec. min., 5<sup>th</sup> December 1935, TNA/18893/Vol.II.

<sup>12</sup> *Kangara* is a type of honey beer.

<sup>13</sup> *Kwetu* No. 10, 27<sup>th</sup> June 39, p.3.

<sup>14</sup> Pres., Afr. Assn., to DO, Dsm, 6<sup>th</sup> December 1934, TNA/12356.

<sup>15</sup> This would help explain the lack of evidence of prosecutions in surviving documents.

<sup>16</sup> Cited in PC, Tanga to CS, 28<sup>th</sup> September 1935, TNA/12356/Vol.I.

<sup>17</sup> See for eg. editorial in *Kwetu*, no.11, 15<sup>th</sup> July 1939, p.3.

<sup>18</sup> Ag.PC,EP to CS, 24<sup>th</sup> June 1938, TNA/12356/Vol.II. It is likely that illicit spirits were also being manufactured and sold in Dar es Salaam between the wars, although there is little indication of its extent.

however. In May 1940, the tapping of *tembo* under licence was authorised, and by the 1950s a handful of *tembo* bars were dotted about the African residential areas in Dar es Salaam. Similarly, from 1947 restrictions governing African consumption of 'European' beers and liquor were slowly removed. Such innovations, however, were in part designed at facilitating administrative control over the trade in alcohol. It had been recognised, for example, that inter-war prohibitions relating to *tembo* had, if anything, simply resulted in its unregulated production, consumption and sale. With the introduction of licences for the tapping of palms, and for its sale in African bars, it was hoped that the urban administration would not only boost its revenue, but also play a greater supervisory role. Continued government intervention was apparent in the small number of licences awarded to African retailers of alcohol and the simple fact that should an individual desire to tap his palms he required a licence issued from the district office in order to do so legally. As a consequence, the illegal production and consumption of all sorts of alcohol continued to be widespread. In Mtoni, the year after licensed palm tapping had been authorised, 46 illegal tappers were found 'in one small area'.<sup>19</sup> The following year the AO at Kiserawe noted:

Illegal tapping of palm wine with its attendant evils of illegal selling of liquor is... very prevalent in the neighbourhood of Dar es Salaam. Drunkenness and hooliganism were as a result, on the increase especially among the youths of the suburban areas who patronise illegal *tembo* clubs to a very large extent.<sup>20</sup>

Illegal bars were patronised by more respectable urban residents also, partly thanks to the poor condition of those licensed by the government.<sup>21</sup> 'There is nothing more horrible in this lovely town of Dar es Salaam than the African bars which have been constructed by the government for us', wrote one 'Non-Abstainer' in a letter to the *Tanganyika Standard*.<sup>22</sup> Drinking in unlicensed bars, however, exposed you to arrest. In 1946 another African correspondent to the *Standard* complained about the criminalisation of such practices:

When Natives drink from private places where conditions are sweet and sound, but after

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<sup>19</sup> PC, EP to CS, 16<sup>th</sup> July 1941, TNA/12356/Vol.1.

<sup>20</sup> AO i/c Kiserawe to DC, Uzaramo, 8<sup>th</sup> September 1942, TNA/61/118/1.

<sup>21</sup> TS, 24<sup>th</sup> August 1946, p.13.

<sup>22</sup> European constructed bars were unpopular elsewhere in Africa. In Northern Rhodesia, according to Gray, 'to Africans the beer-hall was a striking example of the way in which segregation, or the belief that the towns were by right part of the European's preserve, resulted in a rigid refusal to recognize the needs of urban Africans, intruded into the intimacies of their lives, and destroyed their happiness.' Gray, *Two Nations*, pp.220/1.

enjoying for few minutes, there comes the Police – ‘Kamata Hawa’,<sup>23</sup> both the consumer and the beer maker or keeper appears before the Resident Magistrate who offers them a heavy fine as penalty for drinking in a bar in their own Native Land.<sup>24</sup>

In spite of the possibility of arrest, in the 1940s and 1950s *pombe*, *kangara*, and *tembo* were commonly sold unlicensed from peoples’ homes in the African areas of Dar es Salaam.<sup>25</sup> In 1957, the *Wakili* of Kinondoni complained that the town was ‘full of crime... because people are selling *tembo* in their houses without a licence.’<sup>26</sup> In addition, illicit breweries and stills continued to operate on the outskirts of town; in the unplanned African ‘villages’ where police patrols or municipal inspections were infrequent and where control was left to the *Jumbe* or *Wandewa* (Native Administration officials),<sup>27</sup> who tended to be more sympathetic towards, or even have a vested interest in, the trade in alcohol.<sup>28</sup> *Pombe* was consumed at unlicensed bars at the place of production as it was difficult to transport.<sup>29</sup> *Moshi*, *gongo* (the commonest spirits produced) and *tembo*, on the other hand, frequently found their way into town and were consumed there by both Africans and (to a lesser extent) by Asians.<sup>30</sup> Raids on the stills and breweries were carried out every two to three months depending on information received by the police from the native administration.<sup>31</sup> In addition to the consumption of illegally manufactured alcohol there was also, according to Leslie, ‘a fair sale of legal liquor but in unlicensed premises.’ ‘European’ beer and spirits were sold at inflated prices to cover the potential cost of the bar-owner’s arrest, although if surprised the seller was ‘always ready with the excuse that he was only throwing a party for his friends.’<sup>32</sup>

In his social survey Leslie noted that in comparison to other East African towns the restrictions on the production and consumption of alcohol were not strict in Dar es Salaam. Nevertheless, he remarked,

the restrictions have bred contraventions, as they must do in any society where they are not

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<sup>23</sup> ‘Seize these people’.

<sup>24</sup> Letter from E.J.C. Second Non-Abstainer, *TS*, 24<sup>th</sup> August 1946.

<sup>25</sup> Interviews Nos.2 & 5.

<sup>26</sup> *Wakili* Kinondoni to DC, Dsm, 17<sup>th</sup> June 1957, TNA/540/3/91A. (Original in Swahili).

<sup>27</sup> Personal correspondence with D.J.G. Fraser (Superintendent in the Tanganyika police, 1952-1962), 7<sup>th</sup> March 1999; Leslie, *Survey*, p.250.

<sup>28</sup> Baker, in 1941, noted that minor *Wandewa* from the peri-urban fringe were ‘loth to enforce the permit system, probably because they themselves derive considerable revenue from the illegal sale of *tembo*.’ PC, EP to CS, 16<sup>th</sup> July 1941, TNA/12356/Vol.II.

<sup>29</sup> Correspondence with D.J.G. Fraser.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid*; Leslie, *Survey*, p.251.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>32</sup> Leslie, *Survey*, p.251.

backed by public opinion, and the prevalence of such petty contraventions all contributes to the 'spiv' mentality.<sup>33</sup>

The liquor laws in Dar es Salaam were ostensibly formulated (and applied) for the preservation of public order. In actuality they represented one way in which the colonial administration sought the social control of the African population. As Leslie points out, far from encouraging the preservation of order within the town, instead they promoted disobedience and illegality. Such logic appeared to have little impact on the municipal authorities and the police, however, who continued to target illegal bars and their customers up to 1961, displaying a Sisyphean determination to impose an alien order.

### **Petty trade and its control**

Unlicensed hawkers were another group who were vulnerable to arrest and removal from town in the name of colonial order. The principal objection to hawking voiced by colonial officials was that of the risk to public health. This did not apply to those petty traders of goods other than foodstuffs, however, nor was it the whole story with regard to food-sellers. When, in 1921, DO Brett counselled for the relaxation of the prohibition on hawking that had been introduced during WWI, so that 'fit and proper persons' might be granted the licence to hawk as they had in German times, he was informed by his seniors that hawking was not to be encouraged. A secretariat official, before going on to articulate concerns about sanitation, observed that '[t]he more hawkers wander about European houses the more the chances of theft and probability of annoyance to European ladies.'<sup>34</sup> From the beginning of the British colonial period official opposition to itinerant trading within the town had as much to do with public order as public health.

In the inter-war period, whilst unlicensed trading occurred in the town, it was not widespread enough to cause much concern. A sudden increase in hawking from the early-thirties –probably stemming from the reduction in formal employment caused by the depression- resulted in vociferous complaints from Asian traders about unfair competition, along with a more muted official response raising the health risk and the loss

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Undated sec. min. (1921?) in TNA/2618.

of revenue from licences.<sup>35</sup> The numbers involved though, were small enough so that by the end of the year street trading had been regularised, hawkers having been issued with permits.<sup>36</sup> It was after 1940, when the growth of the town's population outpaced the capacity of the urban economy to provide formal employment, that hawking became more commonly adopted as a means of generating an urban income. Setting up as a hawker was relatively straightforward. The capital required tended to be minimal, and whilst returns were usually similarly modest they at least provided a subsistence. More established traders could actually prosper through informal trade. In his social survey, Leslie noted that 'many [women] have managed to save quite large amounts, enough in some cases to build a house with, from the sale of small quantities of firewood, fish or beans, a few cents at a time.'<sup>37</sup> In the 1940s a wide range of products were sold by itinerant traders. They included charcoal, firewood, earthenware pots (*vyungu*) and raffia mats (*ukindu*). Fresh fish was hawked around all parts of the town by local fishermen, so too was fresh fruit. The most common items offered for sale, though, were prepared foodstuffs: *vitumbua* and *maandazi* (types of fried pastries), *samaki wakukangaa* (cooked fish), and *togwa* (a non-alcoholic millet drink).<sup>38</sup> Itinerant coffee and tea vendors were also common.

Municipal and district officials tended not to view unlicensed street trading as a useful means of achieving a subsistence for the urban jobless. Instead it was considered either a public health threat and/or an activity which undermined the licensed and controlled trade conducted (predominantly) in the official markets such as those at Kariakoo and Ilala. Meanwhile, on the Township Authority, the unofficial Indian members also supported the restriction of African informal trade. They appeared to be more successful in serving the interests of small retailers amongst their community than those supposed to be representing African interests. Neither the nominated African member nor the *Liwali* were inclined to support the cause of African hawkers. After the war, as more people took to informal trade, the Authority decided to restrict the number of licences issued to itinerant traders in Dar es Salaam. '[B]y limiting the number of street hawkers, the

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<sup>35</sup> For eg., *TH*, 22<sup>nd</sup> September 1934, p.9, for Asian grievances; and correspondence in TNA/22243 for the official discussion of the problem.

<sup>36</sup> 1934 Report on Township Affairs by MS, [hereafter: MS, 'Township affairs'] TNA/625.

<sup>37</sup> Leslie, *Survey*, p.117.

<sup>38</sup> See DC Bone to MS, 5<sup>th</sup> November 1945, for some of the items traded in the 1940s. I have restricted my discussion to African itinerant traders. Arab Hadhrami traders were also common, associated particularly with the sale of second-hand clothing, although existing sources shed little light on official attitudes towards their presence.

Township Authority', explained Dr. Malik, its' first unofficial chairman, in 1947, 'aimed at a long term policy to eliminate street hawking altogether, ...by not licensing any new street hawkers except those who had been in business for not less than five years, who would go off in the course of time.'<sup>39</sup> 'The Police', it was reported the following month, 'were taking the necessary steps to round up the unlicensed squatters selling foodstuffs in the streets.'<sup>40</sup> This policy was retained into the 1950s. 'Police prosecute those [hawkers] they don't like as fast as possible', a district official pointed out in 1953, 'but many still persist.'<sup>41</sup> Some explanation for this persistence may be gleaned from the grievances voiced by three itinerant traders about restrictions on the sale of foodstuffs in the same year:

we are not trading because we want to, it's because we have a problem. And our problem is there is no work for residents of Dar es Salaam... we are dependent on this business to pay our rent and tax.<sup>42</sup>

Despite the shortage of work, however, the number of trading licenses were highly restricted as the Municipal Council (which had succeeded the Township Authority in 1949) maintained their long-held policy 'to keep street trading to an absolute minimum'.<sup>43</sup> Although in 1955 the Town Clerk declared that 'the vexed question of Itinerant Traders Licenses require[d] close consideration',<sup>44</sup> there was no relaxation of the restrictions on hawking. Earlier that year a special police squad was set up to apprehend, amongst other undesirables, unlicensed hawkers.<sup>45</sup> In the first quarter of 1955, 111 were prosecuted for trading without a licence and fined a total Shs.2,402 as a result of police raids.<sup>46</sup> In the next quarter 31 were apprehended for the same offence.<sup>47</sup>

According to the picture painted by Leslie in his 1956 survey what is perhaps most remarkable about these figures is that so few were arrested. Judging from the survey, unlicensed trading was widespread in the town by the mid-1950s. It included adult men

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<sup>39</sup> TA mins., 21<sup>st</sup> March 1947, TNA/540/27/3.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 18<sup>th</sup> April 1947, TNA/540/27/3.

<sup>41</sup> Hand-written note, 3.9.53, TNA 540/3/75A.

<sup>42</sup> Rajabu Tawaleni, Omari Mfaume and Juma Mwinyimvua to DC, TC, and Council of 40, 26<sup>th</sup> August 1953, TNA/540/3/75A. Orig. in Swahili; my trans.

<sup>43</sup> TC to MAAO, 11<sup>th</sup> November 1955, TNA/540/3/75A.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> QPR, Dsm Dist., 1<sup>st</sup> January-31<sup>st</sup> March 1955, TNA/90/1011/Vol.1.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 1<sup>st</sup> March 1955-30<sup>th</sup> June 1955.

selling fruit between bouts of formal employment,<sup>48</sup> housewives selling cooked beans or fried fish,<sup>49</sup> and children hawking *kashata* (a peanut sweet) or *dafu* (drinking coconuts).<sup>50</sup> 'Small traders there were in plenty', observes Leslie,

pedlars of hot coffee, tea-stall holders, sellers of fruit in season, of roast meat, fish, coconuts, firewood, charcoal, onions, or palm-wine, water-carriers, pedlars of milk, old bottles, flattened kerosene cans for roofing, old clothes, and peanuts.<sup>51</sup>

Buguruni was alive with economic activity when Leslie visited the area, most, if not all, almost certainly unlicensed:

some women have bought lengths of wood and are chopping them for firewood... women mostly, but one man too, have fish sizzling in a pan over a charcoal brazier... to be sold either to one of the Arab shops or to the men direct when they come home from work; others again have bought a sack of charcoal and laid it out in heaps for sale....<sup>52</sup>

In Keko Magurumbasi the main street was 'blocked with hawkers selling oranges, vegetables, charcoal, firewood, anything that one can get in Kariakoo market; and throughout the morning... this street is thronged with shoppers.'<sup>53</sup> Hawking and peddling were, according to Leslie, 'the standard expedients of those unable to find paid employment.'<sup>54</sup> In part the trade was seasonal. Each July, wrote John Cairns a DO in the capitol in the mid-1950s,

Dar es Salaam is flooded with oranges. The spivs and vagrants and the hundreds of youths who drift in from the neighbouring villages have suddenly become fruit sellers. All over town, and particularly in the African areas, they squat by the roadside and under trees with piles of bright oranges heaped before them.<sup>55</sup>

Few of these petty traders were licensed: 'the casual pedlars', observed Leslie, 'seldom bother to comply with the law.'<sup>56</sup> Various strategies were adopted to combat the unwanted attentions of the police and the municipal authorities in order that unlicensed traders could continue to ply their business. In some cases, a meeting of the Municipal Council was told in 1957, 'hawkers disappear for a day or two when the Police or Health

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<sup>48</sup> Leslie, *Survey*, p.121.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p.226.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p.240.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., p.235.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p.180.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p.209.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p.286.

<sup>55</sup> Cairns, *Bush*, p.140.

<sup>56</sup> Leslie, *Survey*, p.250.



Officers are on the look out for them, and then come back again.'<sup>57</sup> In other cases those rounded up simply reappeared on the streets after a few days.<sup>58</sup>

Despite the obvious inefficacy of municipal policy, the attempt to control itinerant trading through restricting the number of licences was persisted with. Unlicensed hawkers continued to be apprehended and taken to court. Records survive of the conviction of one Kasim Abdallah, who, in December 1957, was sentenced in the Kariakoo Native Court to a fine of Shs50/- or one month in prison for trading without a license. In the same court seven months later Idi bin Muhamed received a two month sentence for the same offence, and two other unlicensed traders were sentenced to a fine of Shs100/- or three months imprisonment.<sup>59</sup> In May 1959, a round up of hawkers from Kisarawe Street led to a boycott of business at the Kariakoo fruit auction organised by the Tanganyika African Traders Union. Farmers boycotted the auction in support of the petty traders who bought their produce for resale on the streets.<sup>60</sup> It appears such action had little impact on council officials, however. Later the same year it was reported that instead of increasing the number of itinerant traders licences (which at that point stood at no more than 80) the Municipal Council had decided to reduce the amount available.<sup>61</sup> Members of the Kariakoo Ward Council bemoaned the decision, pointing out that 'many genuine town residents, particularly widows with young children and the temporarily unemployed had no choice but to scrape together a living by small trade.'<sup>62</sup>

It was not until the election of Dar es Salaam's first African mayor, Amri Abedi, a Manyema poet and Ahmadi missionary,<sup>63</sup> that there was a reconsideration of the long-held municipal policy of restriction. On coming to office in early 1960, Mayor Abedi proposed that 'street tea and food sellers should be given licenses to trade freely and hawkers licenses to move freely.'<sup>64</sup> By this time ever growing numbers were resorting to informal trade as a means of getting by. A review of policy was conducted by the council sub-committee. With its block of newly-elected African councillors, there were for the

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<sup>57</sup> TS, 24<sup>th</sup> May 1957, p.17.

<sup>58</sup> TS, 19<sup>th</sup> September 1957, p.4.

<sup>59</sup> Information from TNA/540/3/38B and 561/DC3/17.

<sup>60</sup> Council minutes, June 1959, p.189.

<sup>61</sup> DC Winstanley to TC, 26<sup>th</sup> November 1959, TNA/540/DC9/3.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Iliffe, *Modern History*, p.551.

<sup>64</sup> TS, 7<sup>th</sup> April 1960, p.3.

first time elements on the Municipal Council who were more sympathetic towards the plight of these unlicensed traders. 'The high rate of unemployment in the Municipality is forcing many people to obtain an honest living through street trading', Councillor Kungulilo told a Municipal Council meeting in May 1960. 'These people cannot understand why their efforts should be frustrated by what they consider to be an excessively rigid application of by-laws made in days when circumstances were very different from those of today.'<sup>65</sup> Nevertheless, Indian councillors, keen to protect the interests of sections amongst their own community, remained stubbornly opposed to the relaxation of trading restrictions. 'To reverse this policy', complained Councillor Jaffer, 'would appear a retrograde step both from the point of view of public health and general tidiness of the town and the abatement of nuisance to traffic and pedestrians.'<sup>66</sup> Councillor Sarda declared his opposition to a change in policy for similar reasons: street traders were 'a public nuisance' and there was 'every danger of a public incident occurring' as a result of their activities.<sup>67</sup> The outcome of these exchanges was a compromise in which itinerant fruit and vegetable traders were allowed to operate unlicensed as long as they had acquired written permission to trade from the Town Clerk, whilst regulations were introduced restricting traders of other goods –who coincidentally must have posed a greater competitive threat to established Indian retailers- to operate from approved sites. 192 licenses were made available to such traders. Meanwhile the Police were 'requested to take action against any such traders operating on the streets or sidewalks and against any other persons (excluding approved fruit sellers) trading on the streets with no permit.'<sup>68</sup> '[T]he new controls', announced a satisfied Councillor Jaffer, 'should go a long way towards solving the indiscriminate trading which was going on 'briskly' in Dar es Salaam.'<sup>69</sup>

Such hopes proved misplaced. Four months after the new regulations had been introduced, the Markets, Housing and Fire Committee of the Municipal Council were being informed of unauthorised markets in Magomeni and Temeke, along with the emergence of itinerant traders at the junction of Acacia Ave and Suleiman Street in

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<sup>65</sup> TS, 5<sup>th</sup> May 1960, p.3.

<sup>66</sup> TS, 8<sup>th</sup> April 1960, p.4.

<sup>67</sup> TS, 5<sup>th</sup> May 1960, p.3.

<sup>68</sup> Council mins., Markets, Housing and Fire(MHF)Ctee., 15<sup>th</sup> March 61.

<sup>69</sup> TS, 5<sup>th</sup> January 1961, p.3.

central Dar es Salaam.<sup>70</sup> In June, the Medical Officer of Health observed that 'over the past few months there has been a marked increase of 'pavement restaurants.' 'A large, flourishing one exists every mid-day along Azania Front,' he pointed out, 'and most central parts of town now have these places where the by-laws are being flagrantly violated.'<sup>71</sup> The Municipal Authorities lacked the ability or resources to devise a solution to the problem of unlicensed trading in the town. With perhaps 10,000 or more Africans entering the city annually after 1957<sup>72</sup> —when Leslie had estimated unemployment amongst men between 16 and 45 to be about 18.6 per cent<sup>73</sup>— and employers making more economical use of African labour, the chances of municipal control being exerted over the burgeoning informal economy were slender. In the absence of a more lasting solution though, and faced with the proliferation of pavement restaurants and other unlicensed activities, members of the Public Health Committee in June 1961 resorted to a tried, though hardly proven, response: 'that the Town Clerk be directed to seek Police assistance to clear all unauthorised street traders in the town.'<sup>74</sup>

### **Dealing with the defaulter: tax evasion in Dar es Salaam**

Discussion of the commonest form of social crime in colonial Dar es Salaam has been left till last. Throughout the British colonial period Dar es Salaam was used by many Africans living or working in the surrounding districts of Eastern Province as a refuge from the demands of the state, private employers or the Native Authorities. Of the various fugitives to be found in the town though, the most common were those avoiding payment of taxes.<sup>75</sup> They came mostly from within Eastern Province, both near and far: from the relatively distant districts such as Morogoro and Rufiji as well as from the rural areas of Kisarawe and Dar es Salaam district itself. In addition, evasion of taxes was by no means uncommon amongst the town's resident African urban population either. These tax defaulters, along with Africans who had committed criminal offences and, to a lesser

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<sup>70</sup> Council mins., MHF Cttee., 12<sup>th</sup> May 61.

<sup>71</sup> Council mins., MOH's Report to Public Health(PH) Cttee., 15<sup>th</sup> March 1961.

<sup>72</sup> The difference between the African population of Dar es Salaam recorded in the 1957 census (93,363) and in the 1965 Marco Survey (182,959) is 89,596. Divided by eight this works out at 11,200.

<sup>73</sup> Leslie, *Survey*, p.122.

<sup>74</sup> Council mins., PH Cttee., 16<sup>th</sup> June 1961.

<sup>75</sup> It must be stressed, though, that the commonest form of migrant would have been those who came to the town in order to earn money to meet their tax requirements.

extent perhaps, those without formal employment, were the prime target of colonial actions to preserve urban order. Failure to comply with the fiscal demands of the state represented an indirect challenge to colonial legitimacy. 'It is fundamental', noted the Acting Municipal Secretary in 1937,

that the basis of social organisation rests upon respect for authority and that from time immemorial authority has been recognised in most communities by service or payment in lieu thereof. Where such service or payment is not rendered there is danger of social disorder resulting.<sup>76</sup>

In addition, unsolicited movement to the town occurred in defiance of the colonial organisation of space. Those who avoided payment of taxes through coming to Dar es Salaam then, posed a double challenge to colonial officials and as such remained a primary focus of attempts to control the urban arena.

### **The imposition of taxes**

Hut and poll taxes were introduced by the British throughout Tanganyika Territory from April 1923.<sup>77</sup> Native house tax was payable by the owner of every 'native dwelling', and poll tax by every able-bodied male member of the indigenous population aged sixteen and over who was not liable for house tax. Initially taxes were paid to representatives of the central government, with the introduction of indirect rule in 1926, however, tax collecting duties were conferred upon Native Authorities. In Dar es Salaam, which as a result of its' cosmopolitan urban population remained under direct administration, taxes continued to be paid to central government representatives as well as African representatives of the town's native administration. African property-owners in the town paid Municipal House Tax whilst the remainder of the population was liable for poll tax. Throughout the territory women were exempted from the payment of poll tax, whilst children and more elderly African men were exempted from all taxes. The assessment of those deemed eligible for exemption, however, was notoriously imprecise in the case of both juveniles and the elderly. According to one colonial memorandum the latter were exempted from paying tax when they were considered 'too old to wield a

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<sup>76</sup> Memo on the administration of Dsm by MS, [hereafter: MS, 'Administration'] 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1937, TNA/61/207/Vol.1.

<sup>77</sup> Kenneth Ingham, *Tanganyika: The Mandate and Cameron 1919-31*, p.558, in Harlow and Chilver, *History of East Africa vol. II*, (Oxford, 1965).

hoe', which usually meant between the ages of forty five and fifty.<sup>78</sup> With the overwhelming absence of birth certificates such criteria for exemption could result in somewhat bizarre rituals of inspection:

To pay or not to pay is usually decided by the number of wrinkles on a man's belly and the lines on his face and neck. It is most difficult at times to decide whether an applicant should or should not pay tax. He may get the benefit of the doubt, on another occasion he may be unlucky and leave the Boma or Baraza with his neighbour a younger man than himself but who as a result of a few extra wrinkles has won for himself the coveted certificate. This frequently happens at little visited Native Authority headquarters when possibly a hundred old men are paraded. By the time seventy or so have filed past, the Administrative Officer is so exhausted that he either exempts the remainder or chases them away.<sup>79</sup>

The imprecision of this process could be a matter of great irritation to Africans. 'Men are required to pay tax after reaching the age of eighteen', complained a correspondent to *Kwetu* in 1939, 'but what we don't know is the age at which one is exempted.'<sup>80</sup> The assessment of those youths deemed liable for tax could be equally arbitrary, with officials frequently miscalculating. It was, one official declared in 1931, 'difficult to tell whether an African is sixteen or eighteen.'<sup>81</sup> Once deemed old enough to pay tax the consequences for African youths could be momentous, as an unusually frank official pointed out in 1931:

African males who are not the owners of huts and are, therefore, liable for poll tax are, in the vast majority of cases, the young unmarried natives who, in normal tribal areas have no land or stock or other property and, therefore, no taxable capacity. When they are assessed to tax, they must either evade payment or obtain the monies from their elders, or go out into the employment areas to labour for wages. In practice, they do all of these things, and, certainly large numbers obtain their monies in the labour market. In point of fact there can be little doubt that the poll tax was first introduced in East Africa for the purpose of getting the African into the labour market, and not as a revenue measure. It is, in principle, contrary to the instructions contained in the Memo on Native Policy in East Africa:-

'The levy of direct taxation on the native should definitely be limited to his capacity to pay such impositions without hardship and without upsetting his customary method of life.

Every care should be taken to provide that taxation, whether central or local, does not in its result actually oblige the native to labour for wages as the only practicable means of obtaining the money wherewithal to pay his tax.' (Para 14 (iv))

Circumstances forbid us at present to abolish the tax (even if against HM Government policy) ...but we shall take a long stride towards getting rid of its most objectionable

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<sup>78</sup> Undated memo (circa.1946?) on Native Tax Exemption TNA/61/502/Pt.I.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> *Kwetu*, 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1939, p.14 (original in Swahili).

<sup>81</sup> Sec min by Tr. to CS, 31<sup>st</sup> July 1931, TNA/19925. The European inability to judge the correct age of African youth is exemplified by the discovery in 1944 that the age of many young offenders at Kazima Approved School had been underestimated by as much as five years. See Court Circular No.9 of 17<sup>th</sup> November 1944 and the list of offenders, TNA/28692/Vol.1.

features if we raise the age to 18 or 20 years.<sup>82</sup>

The age was indeed raised by the Native Tax Ordinance of 1934; rendering it payable to 'every native of an *apparent age* of eighteen years.' However, evasion remained common throughout the British colonial period, particularly amongst young Africans, and the burden of taxes on Africans of all ages resulted in not only labour migration but also a flow of defaulters to towns in general and to Dar es Salaam in particular.

### **Tax evasion in Dar es Salaam**

Non-payment of taxes first came to the fore as an issue of concern in the late 1920s. At their conference in 1929, Senior Administrative Officers drew attention to the interconnected problems of African migrancy, mobility and evasion in Dar es Salaam. They bemoaned the great difficulties in collecting tax from 'the floating population of labourers, stevedores, motor drivers etc., who are immigrants from upcountry or from neighbouring territories.' The trouble with these people was that

- (i) They are naturally glad to evade tax.
- (ii) They seldom, if ever, have the amount of it (usually Shs10/-) at any one time.
- (iii) Usually they dispose of their cash earnings as soon as received by purchasing trade goods and depositing them with an Indian on the box system.
- (iv) They have no fixed abode.
- (v) They frequently go by names adopted for work purposes, which they change at will, and not by their own names.<sup>83</sup>

Causing particular concern were those jobless defaulters who drifted in from outlying districts in Eastern Province. '[F]requently', DC Fryer complained in his annual report the following year, 'there have appeared before the Tax Officer fifty or a hundred natives, eighty per cent of them youngsters, all without work, from Rufiji, Kilwa, Bagamoyo and Morogoro Districts, and they are all loafing round town waiting for the time when they can safely return home without being worried for tax.'<sup>84</sup> In researching his social survey the following year, Baker also found that young immigrant defaulters were numerous in the town:

Early in March I spoke with a group of over a hundred men who had been called up by the

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<sup>82</sup> Sec Min, 13<sup>th</sup> August 1931, TNA/19925.

<sup>83</sup> Conference Mins., Dsm, 1929, TNA/54.2.

<sup>84</sup> DAR for 1930, p.8, TNA/53.4.

*Jumbe* as they had failed to pay their Hut and Poll Tax. Some of them were in employment and others not, but only one of them lived in the township and one other in the plantations nearby. The remainder were youths who had, according to their own statements, arrived in Dar es Salaam within the previous three months many of them having come in only a few days before. On the same day another town *Jumbe* told me that he had rounded up a group of tax defaulters which he estimated at 150 all of whom were strangers and had come into the township during the previous three or four months.<sup>85</sup>

Meanwhile, even residents of Dar es Salaam district itself provided grounds for concern. According to Fryer, by 1931 the position was being reached where there was in the district 'instead of a small percentage of passive resisters a large percentage [who] do not pay.' 'For fifteen years', he complained, 'we have administered Tanganyika Territory and we are as lacking today in effective measures for dealing with tax defaulters as we were fifteen years ago.'<sup>86</sup> More coercive methods employed in the collection of tax the following year, however, had the desired effect:

The Police have been used for house to house or hut to hut visits when those occupants who had not paid anything were ordered to go to the Tax Collector to show the cause why they should not be made to work as Tax Defaulters. It was surprising and instructive to find what a large percentage had the money and paid up without further argument.<sup>87</sup>

Evasion of taxes remained common nevertheless, particularly so during the depression years. In 1933 it was estimated in the district report that at the close of the year three quarters of the assessed number of taxpayers were in default. This did not even include the town's floating population, who were distinctly less inclined to meet the fiscal demands of the state than more permanent residents. In these recessionary times people were hard pressed to obtain the Shs10/- required for house or poll tax, citing as reasons for non-payment

- (i) drought
- (ii) low prices for produce
- (iii) damage by wild animals
- (iv) reduced rates of wages
- (v) abuse of the instalment system
- (vi) no money being in circulation<sup>88</sup>

'Much of this is true' commented the District Commissioner. The following year, the Municipal Secretary was highlighting the difficulties encountered in collecting tax from casual dock labour:

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<sup>85</sup> Baker, 'Social Conditions', p.88/9.

<sup>86</sup> DAR for 1931, p.17, TNA/53.4.

<sup>87</sup> DAR for 1932, p.6, TNA/53.4.

To station tax collectors at the wharf in order to make collections from the labourers as they leave with their daily pay is sufficient to ensure that no labour will be offered for further work until a definite assurance has been given that the collectors have been withdrawn. To approach these same labourers after they have arrived at their homes is to find them without the means to pay.<sup>89</sup>

Meanwhile, '[t]he announcement of a tax baraza to be held by an AO' was observed in the 1937 district report to be 'a general sign for all defaulters to disappear from the locality'; the phenomenon of 'the young unmarried man who immediately makes for the township as soon as tax pressure is making matters difficult for him' being a particular problem<sup>90</sup>; adding further to the already 'large number of tax defaulters both in the township and in the surrounding district.'<sup>91</sup>

In a memo the same year Acting Municipal Secretary Huggins described tax affairs in Dar es Salaam as being in a parlous state. No proper poll tax registers were kept; many Africans were paying the wrong taxes; there was no 'real system for controlling tax defaulters'; and with no reliable population statistics it was not even possible to make a proper estimate of African tax receipts.<sup>92</sup> He advised that a comprehensive tax register should be compiled. The following year an attempt was made to do this when the town was broken down into six separate sections, and further sub-sections based on streets, both for tax and administrative purposes.<sup>93</sup> District Office staff subsequently compiled Native Tax Registers which by November 1938 had been completed. The District Officer responsible, however, was not happy with the results:

I regret I am unable to agree these registers are completely satisfactory. It would appear that the present system of town headmen need to be altered so that they are in closer touch with the native population and until this has been done the compilation of accurate tax registers will be almost impossible.<sup>94</sup>

No solution was found to counter the shifting and impermanent nature of a large proportion of Dar es Salaam's population. It remained a perennial problem for those responsible for collecting taxes. In 1941, Provincial Commissioner Baker complained

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<sup>88</sup> DAR for 1933, p.2, TNA/53.4.

<sup>89</sup> MS, 'Township affairs', p.5.

<sup>90</sup> DAR for 1937, p.3, TNA/53.4.

<sup>91</sup> DO, Dsm to PC, EP, 28<sup>th</sup> May 1938, TNA/61/577.

<sup>92</sup> MS, 'Administration', pp.7/8.

<sup>93</sup> DO, Dsm to PC, EP, 20<sup>th</sup> June 1938, TNA/61/207/Vol.1.

<sup>94</sup> DO Pike to PC, EP, 27<sup>th</sup> November 1938, TNA/61/207/Vol.1.



that 'the frequent movement of tax payers from one area to the other either for economic reasons or in a deliberate attempt to avoid payment of tax' obstructed 'the collection of Native Tax in the township and district.'<sup>95</sup> That year an amendment to the Native Tax Ordinance was passed conferring on tax collectors the power to arrest without warrant 'persons whom they suspect upon reasonable grounds of wilful neglect to pay tax.'<sup>96</sup> According to the explanatory memorandum which accompanied the amendment:

The persons whom this provision is intended to effect are those who have no settled area of residence and who are frequently unknown to local authorities. It is considered necessary that collectors should have this power to enable the tax to be collected from this class of natives who would otherwise escape with impunity.<sup>97</sup>

The new legislation had negligible impact on the floating population of defaulters in the territorial capital, however. Nine years on, the problem remained the same; it had simply been exacerbated by the rapid growth of the urban population. The District Commissioner complained that:

Collection of tax in a town this size is far from easy. A fair percentage of the population is a shifting one, with a goodly collection of spivs included who move their lodgings from place to place overnight. Assessment roles are out of date before they are completed and are in fact quite useless. ...It is the bird of passage... who flits from lodging to lodging, changing his job and his address a dozen times a year who creates the problem.<sup>98</sup>

These difficulties persisted up to the closing years of colonial rule. In 1957, Leslie observed that there was no possibility of keeping tax registers up to date, when up to a quarter of the 'younger people' in town were moving house every three to four months, and there was no registration system or restrictions on movement into the town. As a result, he concluded, tax was far more easily avoided in the town than elsewhere.<sup>99</sup> Ironically, the territorial capital -where more officials were in closer touch with a large concentration of Africans than anywhere else in Tanganyika – was acting, as it had throughout the British colonial period, as a sanctuary from the fiscal demands of the state for significant numbers of Africans.

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<sup>95</sup> PC Baker to CS, 25<sup>th</sup> July 1941, TNA/30263.

<sup>96</sup> Explanatory Memo. to Native Tax (Amendment) Ordinance 1941, PRO CO/691/181/42003.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> DAR for 1951, p.3, TNA/61/504/1/1951.

## The extent of evasion

It is hard to construct a statistical picture of the extent of tax evasion in the town throughout the period. Existing records are patchy and unreliable, and, being cobbled together from different sources, are unsystematic as comparative indicators. Nevertheless what information has survived does tend to confirm the impression that tax evasion was common in Dar es Salaam, even amongst those who were registered to pay tax in the town. In late November 1936, for example, 48 per cent of the district's estimated tax yield for 1935 was still outstanding and 62 per cent for 1936 itself.<sup>100</sup> Evasion was likely to have been considerably more widespread than this appears to indicate, as the amount of taxes due were usually underestimated by district officials;<sup>101</sup> meanwhile, the bulk of Dar es Salaam's floating population would not have been factored into the estimates. Another indication of the extent of evasion can perhaps be gleaned from the number of defaulters employed on labour tickets. The totals were surprisingly small, however. Use of defaulter labour appears to have been adopted as something of a last resort. In 1936 just 716 defaulters were employed on labour tickets in the whole of Dar es Salaam district, working a total of 21,480 days (an average of 30 days per defaulter) on forestry and the upkeep of stations and roads. Judging by the number of defaulters employed, the extent of evasion in the district may have risen considerably over the next two years, as by 1938 the total had grown to almost 2,000, working 39,520 days on road maintenance (around 20 days per defaulter).<sup>102</sup> In part this can be accounted for by the high rate of Shs.11/- demanded of those liable to taxation in the district. By the early 1940s the district office had, according to Pike, acquired 'a tremendous accumulation of arrears of nearly £50,000 which was hanging like a millstone on the Native Administration'.<sup>103</sup> People's difficulty in paying the Shs.11/- tax was acknowledged as an important causative factor. In 1942 the arrears were wiped off by central government. Meanwhile, the rate in the rural areas of the district was reduced to Shs.9/- in an attempt to induce payment. In Dar es Salaam town, the rate remained unchanged in order to discourage rural-urban migration at a time of rapid urban growth.<sup>104</sup> Thanks to the changes, 1,217

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<sup>99</sup> Leslie, *Survey*, p.250.

<sup>100</sup> MS, 'Administration', pp.7/8,.

<sup>101</sup> Reminiscences of life as a DO 1947-64 by T. Mayhew [hereafter: Mayhew, 'Reminiscences'], p.18, RH/Mss.Afr.s.2089.

<sup>102</sup> Info. in TNA/61/14/12.

<sup>103</sup> DAR for 1942, p.3, TNA/3/XVII/A.

<sup>104</sup> PAR for 1942, p.20.

more taxes were paid in 1942 than 1941<sup>105</sup> and a full tax collection was achieved in the rural areas. In the town, on the other hand, evasion continued.<sup>106</sup> It remained common throughout the decade. By 1950 the District Commissioner estimated there were 3,000 defaulters in the Municipality alone. Whilst he was confident that many of these would be caught in time, he concluded that even a 90 per cent tax collection was 'merely a pipe dream'.<sup>107</sup>

Raids carried out by the police in conjunction with the Native Administration and tax collectors, which became increasingly common over the final decade of colonial rule, brought to light more and more defaulters in the course of the 1950s. A single raid in November 1952 resulted in the arrest of 676 African 'spivs' and tax evaders. Meanwhile, in 1954, 1,574 defaulters were apprehended as a result of campaigns against undesirables in the course of the year.<sup>108</sup> Continuous raids briefly appeared to be having the desired effect. The amount of tax collected in the first nine months of 1954 far exceeded that for the whole of the previous year.<sup>109</sup> However, whilst it may temporarily have resulted in enhancing collection, it seems that few defaulters were persuaded to mend their ways as the number of tax-evaders caught in raids the following year actually – at 1,576 – just exceeded the 1954 total.<sup>110</sup> Two years on, the Provincial Commissioner was complaining that the collection of tax had been 'even more difficult than in previous years.' 'Despite a seven-fold increase in prosecutions,' he wrote in his 1957 annual report, 'collections were the lowest for some years and investigations reveal that at least 6,000 persons avoid their tax liability.'<sup>111</sup> Partly as a result of this state of affairs, the campaign against undesirables was intensified yet further. By 1958 raids had become a daily occurrence. The statistics resulting from these raids reveal how widespread tax evasion had become by the late 1950s. Of the 930 persons screened in the first quarter of 1958, 761 were found to be in default; the proportion remained at similarly high levels throughout the year. The annual total of defaulters apprehended as a result of raids in the whole of 1958 exceeded 4,000.<sup>112</sup> Of these, 1,563 were eventually prosecuted for non-payment (the remainder

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<sup>105</sup> PAR for 1942, p.20.

<sup>106</sup> DAR for 1942, p.3, TNA/3/XVII/A.

<sup>107</sup> DAR for 1950, p.4, TNA/61/504/1/II/56.

<sup>108</sup> QPR, Dsm Dist., 1<sup>st</sup> October-31<sup>st</sup> December 1954, TNA/90/1011/Vol.1.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., 1<sup>st</sup> July-30<sup>th</sup> September 1954.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., 1<sup>st</sup> October-31<sup>st</sup> December 1955.

<sup>111</sup> PAR for 1957, p.23.

<sup>112</sup> See QPRs in TNA/90/1011/Vol.1.

paid up after their arrest).<sup>113</sup> The position continued to deteriorate in 1959. In round-ups which took place in the latter half of February that year at Buguruni, Kinondoni, Kipawa, and Keko Juu, as many as 1,400 individuals were arrested for tax evasion.<sup>114</sup> At a March meeting of the Legco, Rashidi Kawawa, the TANU politician (former unionist and 'film star') elected as Dar es Salaam's representative in the first territorial elections of 1958, attacked 'the present system of checking tax-defaulters in the towns' which 'was causing unnecessary hardship to law abiding citizens.'<sup>115</sup> Despite the scale of apprehensions, though, action against defaulters was not resulting in an enhanced collection of tax. The total amount of personal taxes collected in Dar es Salaam Municipality declined from 24,704 in 1958 to 23,584 the following year. In 1960 it dropped more dramatically to just 17,173. Such high levels of evasion at the end of the colonial period are an indication of the declining legitimacy of the colonial administration in the face of the nationalist challenge. Certainly the Native Administration was anxious about 'the less responsible members of TANU... suggest[ing] that 'Uhuru' would mean the end of taxation.'<sup>116</sup> By 1959 tax officials appeared to be losing the stomach for the fight. In that year only 284 prosecutions for non-payment of taxes were made. In 1960 it declined yet further to just 185.<sup>117</sup> Raids for tax collecting purposes appear to have been abandoned. In his report for 1960, Durdant-Hollomby recorded that:

Tax was collected by purely administrative means and AOs in charge of Wards gave priority to the matter. Arrangements were made for broadcasts, newspaper handouts and a poster campaign. Street Elders with detailed knowledge of their immediate neighbourhood were used and a full scale publicity exercise was launched by the Minister of Information Services.<sup>118</sup>

These initiatives failed to arrest the slide in taxes collected, however, the total for 1960 declining by over 25 per cent. Durdant-Hollomby held that 'unemployment, industrial unrest and the railway strike can be blamed to some extent for the poor response'. He also reported 'there was a feeling in some quarters that as taxes were likely to be reduced as soon as the present [TANU] Government took office, there were good reasons for delaying payment.' As an explanatory factor, though, the suspension of campaigns against defaulters was likely to have been most influential. As we have seen, at their

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<sup>113</sup> DAR for 1960, p.5, RH/Mss.Afr.s.937.

<sup>114</sup> See TS reports, 27<sup>th</sup> February 1959, 5<sup>th</sup> March 1959 and 19<sup>th</sup> March 1959.

<sup>115</sup> TS, 19<sup>th</sup> March 1959, p.5.

<sup>116</sup> PAR for 1959, p.23.

<sup>117</sup> DAR for 1960, p.5, RH/Mss.Afr.s.937.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

height they were responsible for picking up over 4,000 defaulters annually; around 7.5 per cent of the male population of the town, from whom it was considerably easier to extract taxes than the 'uncaptured' majority.

### **Tackling the defaulter, 1941-1961**

Campaigns against tax-evaders became a perennial feature of life in Dar es Salaam township in the last two decades of colonial rule; their frequency increasing as the scale of evasion became ever more apparent to urban officials.<sup>119</sup> Diverse departments of the colonial administration would be mobilised –the Township administration, tax collectors, and most importantly the police- in order to apprehend defaulters. The first major raid of this type took place in October 1941. A *Tanganyika Standard* editorial provides the background to events:

We have been informed on good authority that tax defaulters among Dar es Salaam Africans are far more numerous than in most other districts, and casual enquiry seems to confirm that the number of Africans who have not only not paid this years tax, but also the tax for last year and the year before, is very considerable. The causes for this would be pointless to seek at present. The effects are clearly that any action taken now would have to be drastic to be useful, and, if drastic, would round up a very large number of local Africans. This is apparently exactly what happened.<sup>120</sup>

Indeed, the intensity of action was such that the editor was forced to criticise officials for over-zealousness:

Correspondence that we have now received alleges not that law has merely been applied arbitrarily, but in fact that it has been far overstepped.

...Viewing the events of last week -again, we speak as laymen- with their wholesale rounding up, arrests, detentions and incarcerations, it seems doubtful whether provisions [of the law] were not in one case or another exceeded, and the excesses were for more than could be explained or made tolerable by the circumstances -a great deal of tax default, and limited staff to deal with it, in Dar es Salaam- to which we have been careful to give full value.<sup>121</sup>

'Some sort of arrangement must be devised', the editor concluded in an earlier editorial, 'that will allow the taxpaying African through and spare undue delay and the ignominy of

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<sup>119</sup> The primary purpose of these campaigns, though, was to attempt to assert control over the urban African population.

<sup>120</sup> *TS*, 10<sup>th</sup> October 1941, p.6.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, p.15.

being herded along with the delinquents without his having to carry on his person (where he has usually little suitable storage capacity for old and well-thumbed papers) receipts dating back several years.'<sup>122</sup> Nothing of the sort emerged, however, and checks continued to be made on the basis of *cheti ya kodi* (tax receipts) for the next two decades. Meanwhile, whilst they may not have matched the scale of the action taken in October 1941 –excepting perhaps those which occurred in the wake of the 1947 strike- raids continued intermittently throughout the 1940s, in the course of which abuses no doubt occurred. The only description of such an instance to have survived comes from Arusha, but it stands as an example of what must have also resulted from tax drives in the capital. In this case an African carpenter employed by an Arusha school was apprehended in the course of a raid. He was fortunate enough to have an employer –the headmaster of the school- who recognised the injustice perpetrated and took up the matter with the district office. In a letter to the *Tanganyika Standard* the headmaster described what had occurred:

He states that he was forcibly detained (with rough handling) by the tax clerks who refused to let him go to his house to produce his receipts, or to come to school to establish his identity. At the Boma he was instructed by the Senior Clerk to sign a conscription form, which he did protesting, but his appeals were ignored. He was then sent to the labour camp with others and put on to jobs such as sweeping. The matter was dealt with entirely by African clerks; he did not see the DO at all. He brought a charge of rough handling and detention, and claimed loss of wages for four days, and Shs.200/- compensation... The hearing of his case involved four days absence from work, at the end of which after an appeal to the DC, he has been told that his conscription was legal, and he has been given Shs12/- ex gratia payment for the four days of work lost while in the labour camp, and allowed no compensation.

It thus appears to be legal for African tax clerks to conscript for rubber production a skilled workman engaged in permanent employment of national importance, who has paid his taxes and has committed no offence - without any reference to his employer. Had I not intervened, he would undoubtedly have been sent to Tanga. My strong representations on his behalf have served only to secure his release, while at the cost of four mornings' delays over litigation he has been given Shs12/-.

Press-gang methods such as these savour more of Nazi Germany than of British justice, and if an educated, experienced man finds he has no escape without European intervention, one wonders what happens to the many others less fortunately placed.<sup>123</sup>

An editorial written in response to the above noted: 'We have had similar complaints, from even more authoritative correspondents and dealing with cases even more striking,

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<sup>122</sup> Ibid., p.6.

<sup>123</sup> TS, 1<sup>st</sup> December 1945, p.16.

about tax collection in Dar es Salaam.<sup>124</sup> These incidents almost certainly represented the mere tip of the iceberg. As the Arusha headmaster pointed out, if educated, experienced *and* employed men were subject to such treatment, what happened to those uneducated, young and/or unemployed individuals who constituted the bulk of the persons screened in raids in Dar es Salaam and other urban centres?

From the early-1940s the fate of the defaulter was increasingly either repatriation to his area of origin or his removal to plantations to work. In a letter to the Provincial Commissioner in 1941, DO Revington pointed out that it was now 'considered that any native who has neglected to pay tax... is an undesirable' (and hence subject to removal from the town).<sup>125</sup> As the decade wore on more systematic methods for collecting tax were introduced, involving more frequent 'raids' and increasing numbers of repatriations. 'Almost every week the District Office mounted a tax drive', recalled former DO Mayhew,

and all those many found without valid tax tickets were brought to the boma.... Those who could establish residence in the town were given the option of finding the money immediately, under escort, or being sent to a camp outside the town for extra-mural labour in lieu.<sup>126</sup>

Those who could not establish residence, meanwhile, were removed from the town. As a result of these efforts the amount of tax collected rose considerably: 1945 was the highest on record, and in the following year, whilst it was not quite so high, thirty six per cent more tax was collected than had been estimated. By 1948 feelings amongst those bearing the brunt of this onslaught appeared strong enough to force the African member for Dar es Salaam, Juma Mwindadi, a Tanga-educated Muslim teacher,<sup>127</sup> to raise the issue of tax collection in the Legislative Council. In November of that year he controversially alleged 'that the collection of tax was being carried out under conditions resembling the old slave trading days and that the Africans were being hunted like animals in order to get them to pay their tax.'<sup>128</sup> Under pressure from colonial officials he apologised for -and withdrew- the strong words used whilst maintaining, nevertheless, that he 'only wished to draw the attention of the Government to the fact that sometimes those responsible for collecting

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid., p.15.

<sup>125</sup> Revington to PC, 24<sup>th</sup> September 1941, TNA/61/688/5.

<sup>126</sup> Mayhew, 'Reminiscences', p.19.

<sup>127</sup> Iliffe, *Modern History*, p.476.

<sup>128</sup> Extract from a minute by CS (to Sec. Stat. for the Colonies?), 15<sup>th</sup> November 1948, TNA/26150/Vol.II.

tax were inclined to use harsh methods.'<sup>129</sup> The emotional nature of the original allegations, however, perhaps provide a truer reflection of the strength of feeling amongst the African population with regard to tax collection in the Township at the time. Colonial officials were insensitive to such feelings though, dismissing accusations of brutality and endorsing current methods of dealing with defaulters. 'In these days of high wages and opportunities for work', wrote Provincial Commissioner Robinson in 1948, 'there is no reason why the ordinary law abiding native should not tender his tax without being called upon to do so. If this were done there would be no necessity for compulsory attendance under escort at the Tax Office.'<sup>130</sup>

Up to 1951 many of those caught without *cheti* who failed to settle their debts were sent to work on public projects in order to make good what they owed, a process described in hindsight by the DC in his annual report for that year:

In the days of tax defaulter labour there was one answer [to a floating population of defaulters] and that was to have lightning raids in the small hours of the morning and grab everyone who couldn't produce a tax receipt and then allow employers or relatives to come along and redeem the defaulters. Those who were not redeemed were sent to Government Departments....<sup>131</sup>

By 1951 Government policy was dedicated to abolishing tax labour –which it viewed as forced labour- in order to fall in line with other British African territories where the system had already been suspended.<sup>132</sup> 'The present provisions regarding discharge of tax by labour', according to an official statement, were 'not in accordance with the present state of development of the territory'.<sup>133</sup> An amendment to the Native Tax Ordinance was discussed by the Legco in due course, in which it was proposed to do away with tax labour and instead deal with defaulters through the courts. Significant settler opposition was raised to the Bill. Brigadier Scupham, a former Administrative Secretary from Iringa, went so far as to describe the proposal to abolish tax labour as 'revolutionary'.<sup>134</sup> He was backed up by another settler representative from Arusha, Major du Toit:

I really can't understand how it can be said that taxed labour is forced labour. It is not forced labour at all. A defaulter is told he has not paid his taxes and he is going to work. I

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<sup>129</sup> Juma Mwindadi to CS, 14<sup>th</sup> December 1948, TNA/26150/Vol.II.

<sup>130</sup> PC, EP to CS, 24<sup>th</sup> December 1948, TNA/26150/Vol.II.

<sup>131</sup> DAR for 1951, pp.3-4, TNA/61/504/1/1951.

<sup>132</sup> TS, 30<sup>th</sup> June 1951, p.21.

<sup>133</sup> TS, 16<sup>th</sup> June 1951, p.13.

<sup>134</sup> TS, 30<sup>th</sup> June 1951, p.12.



support the objection to the passing of this measure. I submit it would be detrimental not only to the authority who are responsible for the collection of the taxes but it will encourage spivs and drones.<sup>135</sup>

In the estimate of Major du Toit the only fault with 'the old form of tax labour [wa]s that it was not hard enough.' 'Where a man got eight days', he concluded, 'he should have been forced to work 48 days or a month: Instead of that we are easing up.' There is some irony to this resolute defence of the current system. Whilst the amendment conveniently removed the charge of forced labour, the onerousness of the tax regulations and punishment for evasion were actually enhanced by the Bill. Those in default of taxes after October each year became liable to a fifty per cent surcharge. Meanwhile those who refused to pay their taxes were not only on conviction subject to a possible Shs.100/- fine or a three month term of imprisonment, but they were also still liable for the original taxes and open to further prosecutions. A more perceptive interpretation of the proposed amendments came from another unofficial Legco member, Mr. Carnegie Brown, from Dar es Salaam. 'Reading the Bill for the first time,' the *Standard* reported, 'he said he had thought it was a measure to promote the flow of labour.'<sup>136</sup> Many Native Administration officials, aware of the potential impact on African households, were also ambivalent about the proposed amendments. In his memoirs former DO Mayhew recalled arguments against the abolition of tax labour:

Extra mural labour on Public works could be done in lieu of a cash payment; the defaulter would be fed and housed and issued with a tax receipt on completion of his task, but the UN ruled that this was forced labour and had to be stopped, to the distress and detriment of the really poor taxpayer.<sup>137</sup>

'Perhaps it would have been better to abolish poll tax', he mused in hindsight. Despite opposition from various quarters, though, after a 16-10 vote in the Legco the Bill passed into law as the Native Tax (Amendment) Ordinance (No. 25 of 1951).

In the final decade of colonial rule the intensification of tax collecting activities continued. Whilst this may have resulted in more taxes being paid, it also had the paradoxical effect of bringing to light the scale of evasion which was going on seemingly unaffected. In the 1950 district report, DC Cadiz complained '[i]t was indeed depressing

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<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> Mayhew, 'Reminiscences', pp.18/19. This is the only reference to UN intervention I have come across, but it is highly likely that it occurred.

to find that the more we increased and improved our methods of collection the more defaulters there appeared to be, and it is estimated that there must be some three thousand outstanding.'<sup>138</sup> Three years later, after the fifty per cent penalty for non-payment by October each year had been introduced, the same problems remained:

It became quite clear during the year that the answer to the difficult problem of native house and poll tax collection is still to be found... Collection to the end of the year was 3,905 taxes below that for 1952. While the introduction of the penalty is successful in ensuring payment by the majority by the end of September, the hard core of professional [sic] defaulters is undoubtedly relieved by the abolition of tax labour; even if sufficient magistrates were available for all these people to be prosecuted, they are not nearer payment after conviction and imprisonment than they were before it. The value of collection by 'kodi' stamps is limited with such people, since the stamps can be sold at a discount and are, I believe, also used as 'chips' in gambling schools. New assessment rolls have been prepared for 1954 for use in a new system of collection by Wards, and pressure will be applied from the beginning of the year, but the problem of the professional defaulter remains.<sup>139</sup>

Pressure was indeed applied the following year with the introduction of more rigorous and more frequent 'spiv raids' resulting, according to a quarterly police report, in a dramatically enhanced collection.<sup>140</sup> A further intensification of raids in the late 1950s resulted in ever larger numbers of defaulters being apprehended. However, it appears from the high proportion of defaulters amongst the persons screened in the raids that these increasing numbers tended to indicate more strongly the greater prevalence of tax evasion as much as increased efficiency in detection. Whilst colonial taxation had been unpopular throughout the British period, in the final years of colonial rule it appears, perhaps not surprisingly, to have had less legitimacy than at any time previously.

### **African resistance to colonial taxation**

Throughout the period under consideration, in Dar es Salaam African resistance to the fiscal demands of the colonial state was widespread. Most commonly this resistance took a passive form, on occasion though resistance to taxation became physical. The District Commissioner in 1937 reported 'frequent incidents between authorised tax collectors and alien natives.' In the most serious incident that year, at Msasani (at that time on the northern border of the township), 'the headman and his staff were attacked by a gang of

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<sup>138</sup> DAR for 1950, p.4, TNA/61/504/1/II/56.

<sup>139</sup> DAR for 1953, p.3, TNA/61/504/1/53.

WaYao; it was necessary to despatch a force of twelve policemen under a European officer to their assistance.<sup>141</sup> In the same year a minor riot resulting from a tax dispute amongst temporary railway employees at Ruvu, in Dar es Salaam district, saw the headman there also requesting police assistance as a result of which twenty arrests were made.<sup>142</sup> According to Westcott, during the 1940s an 'annual tax war' broke out every October involving 'Revenue Officers chasing tax defaulters down the alleys and passageways of Kariakoo.'<sup>143</sup> Meanwhile, F.H. Page-Jones, the Provincial Commissioner in 1948, observed that 'the hooligan element, especially in the township, who have no regular abode have to be subjected to a certain amount of restraint when required to appear before a tax officer.'<sup>144</sup> In another letter later that same year he reported several cases of violence being offered against tax collectors.<sup>145</sup> It was in the 1950s, however, when really serious violence against collectors began to be reported. Between 1952-1956 at least ten violent assaults were recorded in Dar es Salaam.<sup>146</sup> In one incident at Magomeni in February 1957, the house of *Wakili* Mwenyeshehe was attacked by '[a] crowd of about a hundred people... shouting that he was the man causing trouble in Magomeni by persuading Police to enter the area and arrest them for evasion of tax.'<sup>147</sup> In response the *Wakili* rallied some of his supporters and eventually arrested 14 people, although not before his son had been assaulted, sustaining injuries which later required hospital treatment. An even more serious incident occurred the following year, when Namna *aka* Salum Maluka, a Native Court Messenger, was killed by Hussein Masuko after an altercation had arisen as Maluka was checking tax receipts in Mbagala.<sup>148</sup> Thanks to such violent assaults on tax-collectors it was by this time routine for large numbers of police to accompany them for protection. Maluka, however, had the misfortune to be working alone.

Whilst there is plenty of evidence documenting physical resistance to the burden of taxes, the passive avoidance of those responsible for the collection of tax was much more common. As we have seen, it remained relatively simple to conceal oneself in the

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<sup>140</sup> QPR, Dsm Dist., 1<sup>st</sup> July-30<sup>th</sup> September 1954, TNA/90/1011/Vol.1.

<sup>141</sup> DAR, p.3, TNA/53.4.

<sup>142</sup> DAR for 1937, p.3, TNA/53.4.

<sup>143</sup> Life in Dsm during WWII, *Daily News*, 21<sup>st</sup> December 1979, p.4.

<sup>144</sup> PC, EP to CS, 7<sup>th</sup> December 1948, TNA/26150/Vol.II.

<sup>145</sup> PC, EP to CS, 24<sup>th</sup> December 1948, TNA/26150Vol.II.

<sup>146</sup> TS, 19<sup>th</sup> March 1959, p.5.

<sup>147</sup> TS, 13<sup>th</sup> February 1957, p.1.

<sup>148</sup> TS, 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1958, p.1.

township's shifting population in order to escape the fiscal demands of the state. In 1931 the Provincial Commissioner noted that amongst the detribalised Africans in the district there was 'a considerable proportion of tax-defaulters' who recognised 'payment of tax may be resisted by passive resistance and migration from one part of the country to another.'<sup>149</sup> As the largest concentration of population, Dar es Salaam was a favoured place to seek concealment. In the early years of British rule Africans in the town were, according to DC Fryer, fully aware of official powerlessness to prevent evasion. 'A considerable proportion of the tax defaulters', he wrote in 1931, 'belonging to the more sophisticated class of the Native Community... fully realise the present weakness of the law on the subject and the ease with which he can if he likes avoid payment.'<sup>150</sup> Even after tax collection had become more systematised thanks to the introduction of raids in the 1940s, evasion could be facilitated by an overwhelmed Native Administration. In his reminiscences Mayhew recalls a farcical incident from the late 1940s:

On one of these tax-drive occasions I was walking past the window of the tax office and noticed a continuous stream of cheerful young men climbing out of the window and walking away; I went round the corner to the door and found yet more tax defaulters being pushed into the office. I mentioned the open window to the Head Tax Clerk.<sup>151</sup>

Evasion occurred as a result of both disinclination as well as inability to pay. DC Fryer estimated in 1931 that 'fifty per cent at least of the defaulters have at one time or another during the year been in a position to pay their tax but did not and probably will not next year.'<sup>152</sup> Fourteen years later, DC Bone noted that it was not only the poor who showed a disinclination to settle up:

Dar es Salaam has the reputation of being a happy sanctuary for the tax defaulter. If you are poor and lowly, you escape the eye of authority: if you are a highly paid clerk or personal servant of an influential employer, you are not molested and seldom pay of your own volition. Something has been done this year to prove both theories wrong but constant European supervision is necessary to hold the balance between firmness and tyranny.<sup>153</sup>

The perceived need for European supervision indicates an awareness of the abuse of their position by those Africans responsible for the collection of tax. Such abuses would only have reinforced the perception of colonial taxes as unfair. When in 1945 the highest collection of tax on record was achieved –thanks to 'constant pressure, more systematic

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<sup>149</sup> PAR for 1931, p.13.

<sup>150</sup> DAR for 1931, p.6, TNA/53.4.

<sup>151</sup> Mayhew, 'Reminiscences', p.19.

<sup>152</sup> DAR for 1931, p.25, TNA/53.4.

collection and a determined attempt to touch the more highly paid members of the community'- it was noted by the District Commissioner that whilst it 'may be a financial triumph its chief significance is political and disciplinary.'<sup>154</sup> A decade later, judging by an imagined dialogue between two Africans (written by an African informant for the benefit of Leslie in the course of his social survey) which captures perfectly African attitudes towards the burden of taxes both in, and out of, town, these political and disciplinary lessons appeared still to be learnt:

*Joseph:* ...This countryside of ours is awful. Every year you hear 'tax tickets, tax tickets'. Who are you to collect tax off me? Aren't you an African like myself? If I give you this money what will you do for me? If the game just consists of giving me a bit of paper, well, I don't understand it. You, Bakari, do you get this money for yourself? These Europeans who use it don't see what's going on, they don't say anything, or go following people round saying 'tax, tax'. Since you put on that uniform you have turned into a European yourself. This place is getting too small, I'll go off to town. In town they don't know who is who, which came today and which left yesterday. Here everyone knows everyone else, and however we twist and turn these tax clerks follow, oh, the son of so-and-so hasn't paid yet, and that young chap over the hill by the big tree. Tax, tax - but where's the job to earn money? Lucas is it like that in town?

*Lucas:* Well, it is, but tax in town goes by seasons, and also it goes by areas or villages, but we who live in the European parts aren't afraid of it because they don't come into the European parts; it's only when you go into town or go visiting in the built-up areas or for other business and happen to go in when they are having a tax raid, then you may get caught, but many slip through even so. Often people help each other: if one man has got through without being caught he passes the word on and it doesn't matter if you are his tribe or not, he'll stop you and say, 'Brother, there's a raid in such and such a place, if you have paid fair enough but if not have a care.' Those who have paid can most easily pass the word on in this way as they don't reason that as they have paid why shouldn't the others. So the word gets around quickly and it is not difficult to escape the net.

*Joseph:* Thanks, that's the land for me.<sup>155</sup>

To a large degree throughout the colonial period Dar es Salaam was indeed the 'land' of the defaulter. Its' large and shifting African population provided the perfect environment in which tax evaders from the rural areas sought anonymity. Meanwhile, the same conditions facilitated evasion amongst the resident urban population also. The town was a place where, according to C.C. Harris, District Commissioner in the mid-1950s, in order to receive payment 'every individual ha[d] to be physically captured.'<sup>156</sup> In the last

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<sup>153</sup> Uzaramo DAR for 1945, p.5, TNA/61/504/1.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

<sup>155</sup> Leslie, *Survey*, pp.29-30.

<sup>156</sup> Undated (1954?) confidential memo, RH/Mss.Afr.s.1157.

two decades of British rule, through ever more frequent raids on the urban population, this is exactly what urban officials endeavoured to do. These raids could result in an increased tax yield. In the end though, they simply brought to light more evasion. At the same time, perhaps as much as any other factor, amongst the influential urban population the raids helped undermine the legitimacy of the British administration. Without legitimacy the fiscal demands of the state appeared ever more arbitrary, and it is no coincidence that in the final years of colonial rule tax evasion in the town was at its height.

## Chapter Six

### **An unwelcome presence: African mobility and urban order**

To the non-African in Dar es Salaam, whilst criminals were a persistent source of inconvenience or even menace, they were hard to differentiate from the bulk of the African population. As we have seen, even the best-informed colonial officials, such as Leslie, had difficulty separating the criminal from the non-criminal elements. This inability to differentiate often led, amongst officials and (European and Indian) settlers alike, to the perception of an African 'mass' amongst whom the general breakdown of tribal discipline and consequent predilection to miscreancy posed a constant threat to the wider urban community. Of particular cause for concern was the presence of jobless Africans, numbering in the thousands from the early-1940s, who by colonial reasoning had no place in the town. Anxieties such as these found expression in the various by-laws which proscribed African mobility in the European and Indian areas of the town. They were magnified yet further by the increasing numbers of migrants making their way to Dar es Salaam. An emerging community of un- or under-employed Africans, over which the powers of supervision or control were negligible, was a major cause of concern. Other groups too threatened the fragile colonial order. Beggars who reached Dar es Salaam from far and wide cluttered streets and accosted respectable pedestrians, providing an unwelcome reminder of the shortcomings of the colonial regime. Meanwhile, unruly African youth, who had either come unaccompanied to the town or who were beyond parental control, were also a persistent nuisance. On occasion the position in the capital did deteriorate to the point of the serious breakdown of order. These periodic outbreaks of violence simply served to justify and to re-affirm anxieties over the African urban presence.

### **Loiterers, loafers and rickshaw pullers**

Alongside by-laws in the Township Regulations prohibiting unlicensed trade and mendicancy, drunkenness and prostitution, were others aimed at controlling African mobility within the town. Sections 10 and 11 of the 1920 rules stated:

10. No native shall loiter within the 'prohibited area' between 6pm and 6 am.

11. No native shall be within the 'prohibited area' between 11pm and 5am unless in possession of a dated certificate signed by a responsible householder, stating the purpose for which such native is in such area, which certificate shall only be available for 12 hours from 6pm on the date thereof.

The 'prohibited area' covered the main Indian and European residential areas and the administrative headquarters; from Uhindini east to the seashore. Other regulations disallowed 'use of streets' anywhere in the town (by bicycle or on foot) without a light between 9pm and sunrise, failing which an individual could be arrested and was then obliged to satisfy the police or a magistrate of his/her respectability.<sup>1</sup> The existence of such restrictions indicates official anxiety over the administration's inability to control the African population. This anxiety was well placed. Africans in the town frequently acted in ways contrary to European expectations and desires. Amongst other things, they entered prohibited areas at proscribed times, and wandered light-less at night. In addition, daytime 'loitering' in Zones I and II was common, which although not technically illegal was certainly regarded as offensive by many Europeans and Indians, officials and non-officials alike. The presence of unoccupied Africans in Uzunguni and Uhindini discomfited occupants of those areas. Many preferred the perceived cultural distance between themselves and 'natives' to be reinforced by a physical distance; certainly outside the workplace or the commercial sphere.

Concerns were periodically expressed in the European and Indian press. So, in 1922, the editor of the *Dar es Salaam Times* grumbled: '[S]o far as the movement of natives is concerned the thief, and prospective thief, feels himself absolutely under cover besides

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<sup>1</sup> Township Rules, 1923, 149(4).



finding it opportune to commit his nefarious acts.’<sup>2</sup> A decade later his counterpart on the *Tanganyika Herald* complained that ‘native loafers find free access to any corner of this locality [Uhindini] even after midnight even before the eyes of policemen.’<sup>3</sup> Zones I and II, though, remained technically off limits to Africans at night throughout the colonial period. Hamisi Akida remembers that those not employed by Europeans or Asians weren’t allowed there after 8pm. ‘And after 10pm you will never be there’, he recalled.<sup>4</sup> Exceptions were made for those returning from cinemas in the town centre, although even then movie-goers had, after a show, to go directly from the theatre to Kariakoo, and those using more circuitous routes or travelling in the wrong direction were liable to be apprehended.<sup>5</sup> Prosecutions against Africans ‘abroad at night without a light’ were amongst the most commonly enforced of the township rules. Out of 149 reported bye-law infractions in 1931, 44 were for this offence, four more than for those found drunk and disorderly, the next most common offence.<sup>6</sup> Judging by the records of repatriations in the mid-1950s, it is clear that two decades later this bye-law continued to be enforced with regularity, with offenders receiving anything up to one month’s imprisonment for being in the wrong place at the wrong time (followed by repatriation).<sup>7</sup> In addition, prosecutions for loitering and sleeping under a tree at night are also recorded. In February 1957, the Assistant Commissioner of Police reported that ‘intensive police action’ in the Oyster Bay area had, amongst other things- resulted in the arrest of 15 Africans for using the streets without a light and in the prosecution as ‘rogues and vagabonds’ of four men (living in Magomeni) who were found in Oyster Bay itself during the night.<sup>8</sup> In Kinondoni local court the same year, it was once again (by a long way) the most commonly enforced township regulation, with 73 individuals being prosecuted in the course of the year (quite possibly including the 15 caught by the Oyster Bay police). From 1958, however, it appears that the bye-law prohibiting individuals from walking light-less at night lapsed into disuse, with no prosecutions whatsoever for this offence arising in the Kinondoni court in the last two years of colonial rule. The restrictions on African mobility in Dar es Salaam were probably amongst the most unpopular colonial legislation, as well as being difficult to justify to those who suffered from their

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<sup>2</sup> *DT*, 7<sup>th</sup> November 1922, p.7.

<sup>3</sup> *TH*, 7<sup>th</sup> July 1934, p.12.

<sup>4</sup> Interview No.1.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *Report on the Question of Imprisonment in Tanganyika Territory* (Dsm, 1932), App. C, p.13.

<sup>7</sup> See repatriation records from 1955/56 in TNA/540/55/10/1.

<sup>8</sup> Asst.CP, Dsm to CP, 5<sup>th</sup> February 1957, TNA/90/2009/Vol.1.

enforcement. In the changing political circumstances of the late 1950s, the prosecution of un-illuminated night-walkers would have become increasingly untenable.

Concern was also expressed by Indians and Europeans about the daytime African presence. A 1925 editorial in the *Dar es Salaam Times* complained of 'a disgraceful state of affairs, which... old residents of Dar es Salaam have viewed with increasing alarm':

The system of groups of native loafers sprawling across our pavements, in main streets as well as in others, coughing and spitting, as our correspondent points out, and occasionally gambling, as we know from personal observation, would not be tolerated in other countries, Surely our trusteeship of the native does not justify such a degree of pampering of loafers.

Psychologically, the tolerance of such a condition increases in intensity the contempt of this type of native for White authority. They come to look upon the pavements for sprawling purposes as theirs by right, and no way is willingly made for passers-by, men or women, European or non-European. Forceful demand to make way for White women is met unwillingly, accompanied by insolence and disagreeable muttering, which fortunately is not always understood.

Such an evil might be rigorously dealt with by the authorities without in any way infringing the 'rights of the natives,' for it is practised not by the main body of workers, but by a number of loafers, by whose removal the community would not be the losers.<sup>9</sup>

A decade later the same prejudices were being voiced. A correspondent wrote to the *Tanganyika Standard* demanding that idlers be cleared from the streets. The editor of the paper wholeheartedly agreed that steps should be taken to combat this 'obvious evil':

In suggesting that natives who are dawdling to no good purpose should be dealt with, our correspondent voiced what must have been in many people's thoughts. There is more in this than just a dislike of untidiness (streets can look 'untidy' with loafers just as they can with scraps of paper and orange peel). It is really necessary to lay stress on the ills - evils - that can accompany the presence of street corner idlers, if they are not checked in time.<sup>10</sup>

'Not only', continued the editorial, 'are they an offence to the eye but an offence to themselves and the township as a whole.'

Such anxieties about the presence of Africans in the business centre were not restricted to the settler press. The editor of the Indian-owned Herald complained in 1934 of 'unemployed and unemployable natives roaming about in the heart of the township'<sup>11</sup>; and five years later of 'Natives, having no work... found in crowds of 4 to 15 people

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<sup>9</sup> *DT*, 19<sup>th</sup> September 1925, p.2.

<sup>10</sup> *TS*, 4<sup>th</sup> May 1935, p.6.

<sup>11</sup> *TH*, 21<sup>st</sup> July 1934, p.9.

sitting or sleeping on footpaths, talking and shouting... [who] will not move on from the places but on the contrary sometimes will abuse.'<sup>12</sup> Nor was it confined to the unemployed. Casuals who frequented the docks were another target of the settler press. 'We wonder when boat natives are going to be controlled', wrote one correspondent in the *Dar es Salaam Times* in 1920. 'They are a danger to the life and property of any European who puts in an appearance on the jetty, with their jostling, pushing and screaming for ones custom.'<sup>13</sup> A later correspondent to the paper elaborated on the situation in 1923:

It is a common occurrence to see passengers luggage, and in the case of non-Europeans even their persons, forming the centre of a violent struggle for possession among the loafers of the town and boat boys. The one or two bewildered *Askaris* on the pontoon are no match for the gang of toughs composing the boat crews, and their futile attempts to control them is a common source of wonder to lookers-on that their numbers are not strengthened and that they are never supported by a responsible officer.

...Would it be too much to expect one of the local European Officers of the Police to put in an appearance at the wharf occasionally to see that the rabble which collects at the wharf for the purpose of fleecing inexperienced travellers is under proper control and that their persons and luggage are not subjected to violence and damage.

The pandemonium prevailing on the occasion of the presence in the harbour of the SS Karapara this week was beyond description, and I trust that something will be done to prevent the possibility of such a scene in the future.<sup>14</sup>

'We took up this matter once before,' the editor wrote in response to the letter, 'and a certain amount of orderliness resulted, but the boat-natives have again been allowed to get out of hand. Strictest discipline must be maintained if passengers are not to be unduly molested.'

Once ashore –according to this way of thinking- hapless European travellers were then at the mercy of unscrupulous 'native' rickshaw pullers. 'One hears from time to time', wrote the District Superintendent of Police in 1926,

of instances of the gross overcharging of passengers who come ashore from liners and engage rickshaws to see the sights. They are charged say Shs.10/- for a Shs.4/- ride, they protest, the rickshaw boy becomes vehement and to save a scene they pay the amount demanded.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> *TH*, 18<sup>th</sup> January 1939, p.8.

<sup>13</sup> *DT*, 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1920, p.6.

<sup>14</sup> *DT*, 20<sup>th</sup> January 1923, p.9.

<sup>15</sup> Dist. Supt., to CP, 17<sup>th</sup> September 1926, TNA/61/206.

Africans pursuing this line of business were, above all others, the focus of concern on the part of Europeans in Dar es Salaam (less so other non-Africans, judging by the Indian newspapers). Rickshaw pullers had an enhanced right of access to European and Indian areas, particularly at night, and although in the central area they were supposed to remain at designated stands this rule was frequently ignored.<sup>16</sup> Their presence in Zones I and II made many uneasy. The vehicles and their operators were considered the vectors of disease. In 1921 the *Dar es Salaam Times* drew attention to a new disease which had been identified by the Minister of Health in Nairobi, spread by lice which were found in the upholstery of rickshaws there. They were, according to the paper, 'present owing to the irregular habit of the ricksha boys, who often sleep in the vehicles.'<sup>17</sup> The following month, the paper reported satisfaction 'that among the proposed new laws for rickshas in Nairobi, ricksha boys lying or sitting in a ricksha shall be found guilty of a punishable offence.'<sup>18</sup> Having noted that '[i]n Dar es Salaam the risk is equally great' the paper recommended 'to the authorities here the adoption of similar measures, and insistence on clean and washable covers to all rickshas, as well as on periodical examinations.'

An additional danger of the close encounter between colonial subjects and masters arising from the rickshaw trade was that it might result in the undermining of the mystique of European superiority. According to Orde-Browne their 'employment at night is apt to show an unedifying side of the European character.'<sup>19</sup> 'Every ricksha', he observed anxiously five years later, 'must have a considerable experience of helplessly drunk passengers'.<sup>20</sup> If we accept the criticisms of the *Dar es Salaam Times*, the rickshaw-pullers' experience of Europeans *was* resulting in Africans who refused to know their place. A 1925 editorial on 'the growing insolence of the native' singled out 'Rickshaw Boys' for particular ire:

One can see these lolling in their own rickshaws, which are hauled up on the footpath, whilst the owners casually invite passing pedestrians to 'N'joo! N'joo! Rickshaw;' or else they pester one in a most impudent and embarrassing manner, refusing to take 'No' as a reply unless they believe that the person importuned is not likely to stand much nonsense.

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<sup>16</sup> *TH*, 28<sup>th</sup> October 1933, p.10.

<sup>17</sup> *DT*, 7<sup>th</sup> May 1921, p.6.

<sup>18</sup> *DT*, 4<sup>th</sup> June 1921, p.4.

<sup>19</sup> DAR for 1924, p.10.

<sup>20</sup> Orde-Browne to CS, 18<sup>th</sup> January 1929, TNA/11205.

We have seen Rickshaw boys, dressed in their filthy clothes, lounging on their rickshaw, which was drawn up on the footpath running along the sea front, leering in a most bestial manner at passing European ladies.

During the week an *askari* attempted to 'move on' a rickshaw boy who had drawn his 'shaw up on the path. As the boy refused to move it the *askari* pushed it out of the way but the rickshaw boy returned it to its former position. This occurred twice, to the accompaniment of much bad language on the part of the boy and much jeering by a crowd of Swahilis, who enjoy seeing authority in any form defied by one of their number.

These instances can be multiplied greatly and are the outward signs and warnings that our laws cannot protect us from persons who do not respect the conventions and duties that modern civilisation expects from us.<sup>21</sup>

The relationship between puller and passenger was frequently a tense one. It is likely though, that the experience for the African puller tended to be significantly more demeaning than for the occasional European whose pride was wounded. Indeed, for all the 'native insolence' that the *Times* complained of, an angry European had recourse to violence in a way which was unimaginable the other way round. 'Last Saturday afternoon', a correspondent to the newspaper wrote in 1919,

a certain white man was seen in Third Street knocking a ricksha boy about in a most disgusting fashion, kicking him in the abdomen, and punching his face until the poor boy could hardly stand. The boy was so badly hurt that he had to call a small *mtoto* to pull his ricksha for him, whilst he did his best to hobble along by the side of it.

After completely satisfying himself that he could not do much more harm to the boy without killing him, the said white man got into another ricksha and went on his way.<sup>22</sup>

In fact, regardless of the –probably slight– risks of such abuse, pulling a rickshaw was physically (and, no doubt, psychologically) punishing enough in itself. Orde-Browne, in 1929, described the 'disgusting and disgraceful sight' of 'two large and portly passengers being dragged up the little hill past the European hospital by one wretched youth, bent almost double and gasping for breath.'<sup>23</sup> Such a spectacle in Dar es Salaam, he wrote to the Chief Secretary, 'should be made impossible.'<sup>24</sup>

Whilst the unsalutary effects of the encounter between Europeans and Africans which occurred as a result of the rickshaw trade were widely deplored, it was the rickshaw pullers purported criminal tendencies which were the focus of greatest concern. The

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<sup>21</sup> *DT*, 9<sup>th</sup> May 1925, p.2.

<sup>22</sup> *DT* 24<sup>th</sup> December 1919, p.2.

<sup>23</sup> Orde-Browne to CP, 9<sup>th</sup> February 1929, TNA/61/206.

<sup>24</sup> Orde-Browne to CS, 18<sup>th</sup> January 1929, TNA/11205.

'class of native' employed in this occupation, complained the District Commissioner in 1924, 'is a decidedly undesirable one, and it is unfortunate that public convenience necessitates the employment of so many natives in this work.'<sup>25</sup> Even those who entered the profession as upright and honest were considered to be soon corrupted. Orde-Browne stressed what an 'unedifying education this life must be for an unsophisticated African.'<sup>26</sup> 'The occupation', he pointed out, 'is a demoralising one':

Profits depend largely upon the success with which the passenger can be deceived, or even, threatened, over the amount of fare due; while the owner from whom the vehicle is hired,<sup>27</sup> is not exactly an elevating influence.

The rickshaw puller, Orde-Browne complained,

is in almost every case an actual or potential criminal. The occupation is an ideal mask for theft; it is perfectly easy for an excuse to be found for the presence of a ricksha almost anywhere, at any time; one keeps watch, while the other collects any available loot, which can be conveniently hidden and carried away in the vehicle; and nothing but detection red-handed is likely to lead to discovery.<sup>28</sup>

The Commissioner of Police, whose subordinates were responsible for the supervision of rickshaws, refuted this characterisation of those Africans engaged in the trade. 'The character of every applicant for a licence is very closely enquired into', he assured the Chief Secretary, 'and there is not one licensed puller with a criminal record which would rightly debar him.'<sup>29</sup> However, even if, in 1929, the Commissioner's impression was correct, over time it was Orde-Browne's fears that appeared to be confirmed. Twelve years later it was a senior police officer who was bemoaning the

idle and unsavoury character of rickshaw boys normally employed here. Many so employed are not natives of Dar es Salaam and very few actually keep to rickshaw work, while those who are old hands are without exception persons with criminal or other records against them. There is the famous 'Mumba' who has over fifty previous convictions against him for 'drunk and disorderly': he is still pulling a public hire rickshaw about the town.

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<sup>25</sup> DAR for 1924, p.10.

<sup>26</sup> Orde-Browne to PC, EP, 19<sup>th</sup> January 1929, TNA/61/206.

<sup>27</sup> According to the *DT* of 28<sup>th</sup> May 1921, reporting a strike by rickshaw pullers: 'The method hitherto has been for the boys to hire the rickshas by the day, anything they earn over and above the bike fee being their own profit.' The ethnicity of the vehicle owners is not reported, but it was almost certainly Indians who controlled the rickshaw trade in Dar es Salaam. The strike had occurred due to a fall in pullers' earnings. The *Times* was surprised by the high degree of organisation the strikers displayed. 'The deputation of ricksha boys', it reported, 'which met the authorities was based on the best European lines, having eloquent spokesmen, and their points clearly and concisely outlined. We wonder if a Ricksha Carriers Trade Union exists?' Such a characterisation of the rickshaw pullers actually contradicts the disparaging tone to be found in other discussions—including *Times* articles and editorials—of this section of the urban population.

<sup>28</sup> Orde-Browne to CS, 18<sup>th</sup> January 1929, TNA/11205.

<sup>29</sup> CP to CS, 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1929, TNA/11205.

Another famous character is Juma bin Hamisi; with over thirty previous convictions also plying a rickshaw for hire. These boys are broadly speaking nothing but 'pimps'; they tout for work on boat days and are a perfect nuisance to the visitor when he comes ashore. When the harbour is idle they have very little work and it is not possible for them to earn an honest living. None of them own a rickshaw and therefore have no responsibility attached; consequently most rickshaws are in poor repair and in a filthy condition.<sup>30</sup>

As a result of the condition of both the vehicles themselves and the persons operating them, the Superintendent recommended the complete removal of rickshaws from Dar es Salaam. The Municipal Secretary brought forth further evidence to support this course of action. '[T]his trade', he pointed out, attracts the worst kind of native'; 16 out of the 18 licensed pullers having been 'convicted for various offences, some of them on several occasions.'<sup>31</sup> As is apparent from the small numbers of rickshaw pullers in the town at this time, however, it was a dying trade, the rickshaw's place being usurped from the early 1930s on by the faster and more comfortable –not to mention humane– taxis. Instead of banning their use, licensing procedure was made more strict and they were otherwise left to fade away. The small number of rickshaw operators left though, proved tenacious, refusing to recognise that their time was up. They continued to function as late as 1951, at which time they were reportedly being utilised by prostitutes in the town.<sup>32</sup> After a number of complaints against them in this year, however, the municipal authorities finally opted for their removal.<sup>33</sup>

By the time the last rickshaws had ceased operating on the streets of Dar es Salaam the heightened racial consciousness (at least on the part of Europeans) that was a feature of inter-ethnic relations in the period between the wars appears to have dissipated. Whilst the editor and readers of the *Tanganyika Standard* –which had taken the place of the *Dar es Salaam Times* as the settler mouthpiece– in the 1950s may have fulminated on the presence of idlers in the town, such complaints were no longer informed by the racial anxiety that appears to have informed similar complaints in the 1920s and 1930s. The public articulation of concern over 'native insolence', over Africans leering at European women or failing to accord their social betters the respect they felt was their due, was no longer acceptable. In its stead more commonplace worries were expressed over

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<sup>30</sup> Ag.SP. to MS, 26<sup>th</sup> August 1941, TNA/30218.

<sup>31</sup> MS to CS, 20<sup>th</sup> November 1941, TNA/61/206.

<sup>32</sup> The same appeared to be true in Nairobi, where the Resident Magistrate had in 1946 come to the conclusion that 'rickshaws are used chiefly for illegal purposes, that the pullers are mostly pimps and procurers and that these vehicles assist them in their trade.' *TS*, 30<sup>th</sup> March 1946, p.10.

<sup>33</sup> CP to CS, 28<sup>th</sup> February 1951, TNA/41119; and personal correspondence from Joan Thompson, 1<sup>st</sup>

increasing unemployment in the town, and the associated incidence of crime. As part of the effort to address these worries, municipal bye-laws restricting the nocturnal mobility of Africans within the town continued to be enforced. By the late 1950s though, as we have seen, even these had to be relaxed. The strength of TANU was the ultimate indication that the colonial 'native' no longer knew his place.

### **The 'beggar problem' in Dar es Salaam**

Mendicants were another group who persistently refused to recognise their allotted colonial space. Whilst the presence of beggars may, as Iliffe observes, 'have performed a necessary function where almsgiving was a religious obligation',<sup>34</sup> colonial officials were not inclined to accept such visible reminders of the shortcomings of the regime in the territorial capital.

Legislation aimed at the prevention of mendicancy included the Destitute Persons Ordinance of 1923, which allowed for the imprisonment and/or repatriation of 'any person without employment and unable to show he has visible and sufficient means of subsistence.' More explicitly aimed at beggars were sections of the 1930 Penal Code which targeted both 'every person wandering or placing himself in any public place to beg or gather alms, or causing any child to do so'; and 'every person wandering abroad and endeavouring by the exposure of wounds or deformation to obtain or gather alms.'<sup>35</sup> Such legislation suggests that mendicancy existed in the territory from the earliest years of colonial rule. Since Dar es Salaam represented the principal concentration of population and wealth in Tanganyika, it is likely that beggars were present in the capital from this early stage, although the first surviving evidence of mendicancy in Dar es Salaam comes from the 1930s. In 1934 an editorial in the *Tanganyika Herald* drew the attention of the authorities to 'crippled, unemployed and unemployable natives roaming about the heart of the township, some with a bowl, others pickpocketing and a few gambling in broad daylight.'<sup>36</sup> The editor displayed little sympathy for these unfortunates. '[N]eeding serious consideration at this stage of the native evolution', he considered, 'is

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<sup>34</sup> Iliffe, *African Poor*, p.33.

<sup>35</sup> Penal code (No. 11 of 1930) section 166 (2) and (4).



[the] begging habit. It is necessary to do everything possible to root out this growing evil.' His counterpart at the *Tanganyika Standard* concurred. 'One of the nuisances which come under public notice', he wrote in 1935,

is the growing habit of children to beg on the streets. It is not haphazard; the children clearly have been taught. They make a very cautious approach and inform the passer-by that they are hungry. Others may be seen methodically turning out dustbins. It is an uncomfortable thought that any child in Dar es Salaam should go hungry, but if there are any who do they must not be left either to beg or to hunt for food amongst the rubbish. We do not suggest that in the first instance it is a matter for the Police, though to judge from the proceedings of the Magistrate's Court quite a number eventually do make the acquaintance of members of the Force in their official capacity. It is the prevention of this growing evil that must be sought.<sup>37</sup>

Early the following year, in response to a request in the Legco by Mr. Adamjee for control to be exercised over the increasing number of beggars in Dar es Salaam, the Provincial Commissioner reported that there were 'twenty Natives... who have no means of subsistence and beg for a living.'<sup>38</sup> He complained that 'the religious custom of distributing, indiscriminately, alms to door to door supplicants on Holy days, which prevails amongst Mahomedan and other communities, tends to encourage a class of professional beggars.' He recommended the organisation of a central fund through which 'deserving cases' could receive alms and begging could be controlled. Nothing was done, and the situation continued to deteriorate. The following year Municipal Secretary Huggins informed the Commissioner that the town was 'full of mendicants, the lame, the halt, the lazy, the unemployable.'<sup>39</sup> By this time there were forty habitual mendicants (including fifteen women) residing in the town. In addition there was 'a large number of destitutes who come in periodically to beg.'<sup>40</sup> Of the forty, twelve were blind, the others 'paralysed, deformed and deficient of limbs.' The majority were aged. 'The conditions under which they now live are pitiable' commented Huggins. 'Those who cannot obtain lodging from some charitable organisation sleep in temporary shelters and forage in the garbage and refuse of markets and eating houses.' Periodically they had been charged and convicted. They were unable to support themselves except through begging, however, and repatriation was not possible in most cases as they had no surviving relatives. In the circumstances they were only warned and, according to Huggins, '[t]he Police now direct

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<sup>36</sup> TH, 17<sup>th</sup> July 1934, p.9.

<sup>37</sup> TS, 25<sup>th</sup> May 1935, p.6.

<sup>38</sup> PC, EP to CS, 30<sup>th</sup> January 1936, TNA/61/261/Vol.II.

<sup>39</sup> MS to PC, EP, 8<sup>th</sup> March 1937, TNA/61/261/Vol.II.

<sup>40</sup> MS to PC, EP, 15<sup>th</sup> October 1937.

their efforts to keep these people away from the residential and commercial quarters of the town where in the past they have been accustomed to wander on Sundays and Fridays in search of charity.'

It was recognised that such a state of affairs could not be allowed to persist, and in the late 1930s, on the instigation of the Township Authority, a paupers' camp was built at Kipawa, eight miles from the town centre. Here, reported Pike in 1939, 'the deformed beggars who were such a pest and an eyesore in Dar es Salaam have been sent.'<sup>41</sup> The camp received scant resources, however. Just three years after its establishment, DC Revington declared it was 'squalid and uncared for and should be entirely rebuilt.'<sup>42</sup> Whilst seventy men, women and children were housed in the camp this did not appear to have had a significant influence on the numbers of destitute and disabled persons to be found in the town centre. '[T]he number of natives in Dar es Salaam who by reason of old-age, ill-health or physical incapacity are forced to eke out a precarious livelihood by begging appears to be increasing', the Solicitor General told the Chief Secretary in 1942. 'I am informed that a shop-keeper can reckon on being accosted by thirty to forty such natives who parade the streets, particularly on Fridays and Sundays.' It must be recognised by now', he continued,

even by the extreme die-hards, that the obligation to remove this social evil rests on the Government. Such a view is in accord with the Atlantic Charter which stipulated that every person, however humble, is entitled to live in freedom from want. It is idle to seek to rely on the social sense of responsibility among natives in a detribalised area like Dar es Salaam. A camp should be established where such persons could be fed, clothed, accommodated and provided with a little pocket money. In return they should be required to do such work as they are able. Only if such accommodation is available, is it legitimate for the police to prosecute such persons for begging.<sup>43</sup>

However, the only response to what was described at the end of WWII as the 'swarm of beggars perambulating from house to house and shop to shop... to the annoyance of the public'<sup>44</sup> was the tightening of Police control.<sup>45</sup> In July 1946, 24 beggars were rounded up and charged with vagrancy.<sup>46</sup> Three weeks later, the President of the Township Authority, Mr. Bryant, thanked the Police 'for the good job carried out by them recently

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<sup>41</sup> Pike, 'Native Affairs', p.12.

<sup>42</sup> DC Revington to PC, EP, 23<sup>rd</sup> January 1942, TNA/30134.

<sup>43</sup> Ag. Solicitor General to CS, 5<sup>th</sup> January 1942, TNA/22360.

<sup>44</sup> The correspondent identified five categories of beggar in the town: the blind, crippled, diseased, insane and paupers. Dsm Social Service League to TA, 15<sup>th</sup> June 1945, TNA 30134.

<sup>45</sup> TA mins, 19<sup>th</sup> July 1946, TNA/540/27/3.

in rounding them up, and for the Police drives still being carried on to rid the town of this nuisance.<sup>47</sup> At the same meeting, proposals were belatedly put forward for enlarging and improving Kipawa. Government continued to try to absolve itself of responsibility, however. An attempt to hand over the camp to the Salvation Army in 1948 was only thwarted by resistance from prominent Muslims, who feared inhabitants would be vulnerable to conversion, and any hopes for its improvement remained dependent on substantial donations such as the Shs2,000/- received from the East African Muslim Welfare Society in the same year.<sup>48</sup> Although by the end of 1948 the Social Welfare Department appear to have assumed responsibility for Kipawa, it provided a refuge for just forty five paupers, eighteen less than in 1942.<sup>49</sup> By 1954 the number had fallen to twenty four.<sup>50</sup>

Within Dar es Salaam itself mendicants continued to represent a nuisance to the respectable citizens of the town. In 1950 the Women's Service League of Tanganyika requested for 'arrangements to be made for Africans to be allowed on the streets on Fridays only which is the recognised begging day'.<sup>51</sup> 'Beggars', the Commissioner of Police informed the Chief Secretary in response to this request, 'are a perennial problem and are dealt with periodically when other more pressing duties permit'.<sup>52</sup> 'Although busy on a big 'spiv' drive', he assured the Chief Secretary, the 'Police will do what they can to discourage beggars'. According to one secretariat official, though, the 'beggar problem' was actually exaggerated thanks to the activities of a handful of particularly conspicuous destitutes who were 'so persistent... that they give the impression of being more numerous than they are':

There are three in particular - a fat, elderly man, a youth of about 14 who crawls about on the pavement with great agility (he has something wrong with his legs) and an elderly blind woman who is led with a stick by a small boy - whom one sees in Acacia Avenue almost every other day. I believe that if the police could manage to eliminate these few 'regulars' the problem would be urgently solved, at least as far as the European shopping areas are concerned.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> TS, 6<sup>th</sup> July 1946, p.17.

<sup>47</sup> TS, 27<sup>th</sup> July 1946, p.9.

<sup>48</sup> See TA mins 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1948, 18<sup>th</sup> June 1948, and 16<sup>th</sup> July 1948 in TNA/540/27/3.

<sup>49</sup> First [and only surviving] monthly report by the Social Welfare Officer, 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1948, TNA/30134.

<sup>50</sup> DC's Min., 2.2.54, TNA/30134.

<sup>51</sup> Sec. of the Women's Service League to MLO, 13<sup>th</sup> January 1950.

<sup>52</sup> CP to CS, 13<sup>th</sup> April 1950, TNA/30134.

<sup>53</sup> Sec min., 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1950, TNA/30134.

The narrow concern with the 'European shopping areas' perhaps gives some indication as to why this official remained more complacent about the problem than other observers.

By the mid-1950s, with the problem of urban mendicancy becoming increasingly severe, it was discovered that large numbers of beggars were coming from further afield than had previously been thought.<sup>54</sup> 'In the last few months, and probably due to famine,' complained the District Commissioner in 1954, 'large numbers of blind beggars of ages ranging from 6 to 60 have been coming into Dar es Salaam from Dodoma.'<sup>55</sup> He wrote to the Traffic Superintendent for 'help or suggestions for preventing what is now a serious public nuisance.' 'The only action you could take', he suggested, 'would be unofficial – advising the booking clerk at Dodoma, which is the main trouble spot, not to accept fares from obvious travelling beggars. They are easily recognisable by their blindness and their guides.' '[T]he only real solution is action by the Dodoma Police', responded the Traffic Superintendent. 'I fear however this will simply result in them joining from another station.'<sup>56</sup> Two years later it was reported that police surveys had revealed the existence of a 'professional class of beggar' in the capital. The Tanganyika Council of Social Service was told that 'over half of the beggars in Dar es Salaam were indigents who came from long distances, remained a few weeks and returned home.'<sup>57</sup> Meanwhile, a 1957 editorial in the Tanganyika Standard reported 'a well-organised 'racket' behind begging in Dar es Salaam'. Whilst offering no evidence to support this, an overblown, but nonetheless revealing portrait of the extent of mendicancy in the town was painted:

Something really drastic must be done to rid the streets of Dar es Salaam of the countless beggars which [sic] molest pedestrians, poke their heads –and at times hands– into cars parked in the main thoroughfares and are an extremely bad advertisement for Tanganyika so far as tourists and passengers from the ships are concerned.

During the four days before Christmas, when the streets and the shops were crowded, the beggars simply flocked into town. There were young ones, well able to do a day's work, leading the deformed and the blind, the latter trying to make their pitiful plight still more apparent to passers-by by being clad in the filthiest of rags. One such group of beggars consisted of a young and dirty woman leading an old and allegedly blind man while another young and better clad woman, with a healthy and well-fed youngster of about three strapped to her side, went from shop to shop, or from passer-by to passer-by, all with their

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<sup>54</sup> Whether this discovery was evidence of a new trend or simply the belated recognition of the mendicants mobility is hard to say.

<sup>55</sup> DC, Dsm to Traffic Supt., Dsm, 10<sup>th</sup> November 1954, TNA/540/3/1.

<sup>56</sup> Ag. Dist. Traffic Supt. to DC, Dsm, 17<sup>th</sup> November 1954, TNA/540/3/1.

<sup>57</sup> Tanganyika Council of Social Service [TCSS], mins. of meeting, 24<sup>th</sup> September 1956, TNA/540/1/78.

hands out, even the toto calling out for money. But they were only four of what must have been hundreds.<sup>58</sup>

Whilst mendicancy appears to have become increasingly common in the European and Indian areas in the final decade of colonial rule, thanks to the dearth of published sources it is hard to get any impression of its incidence in Zone III. It is likely that beggars were seeking alms here just as they were elsewhere in the town. Although the African township may not have been so prosperous, the chances of operating undisturbed were probably greater than in the more strictly policed Uzunguni and Uhindini. Masudi Ali, who was living in Kariakoo in the 1950s, remembers one particularly prominent female beggar, Binti Hassani Kulomba, operating there. He also recalls that beggars were periodically rounded up and repatriated by the Social Welfare department, although it was never long before they re-emerged on the streets of the capital. According to Mzee Ali, however, orthodox begging was not particularly common in the African areas. Although sometimes people adopted the *Kalamwani* style, in which mendicants performed dances in return for alms.<sup>59</sup>

By the late-1950s growing numbers of beggars were making their way to Dar es Salaam. This was partly the product of structural destitution, such as the diminishing capacity (or inclination) for rural communities to care for the disabled. In 1960 the Superintendent of Tanganyika's main mental hospital, Cyril Smartt, complained:

There is an increasing denial of social responsibility on the part of the African people themselves for their dependants and there is also a tendency to send vagrants, beggars and other social nuisances to mental hospitals as the line of least resistance.<sup>60</sup>

However, cyclical destitution -such as weather failure- was at least as significant a factor. Whatever the causes, the authorities could not tolerate the presence of such large numbers of indigents appearing on the streets of the capitol. Several recommendations were made in response to the situation. First, that 'the Police should undertake the regular round-up of persons found begging in the town.'<sup>61</sup> Second, it was proposed that the former Nunge Leper Settlement on the outskirts of Dar es Salaam should be re-opened in order to accommodate 30-40 destitute persons in addition to those already residing at Kipawa.

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<sup>58</sup> TS, 28<sup>th</sup> December 1957, p.2.

<sup>59</sup> Interview No.7.

<sup>60</sup> Quoted in Iliffe, *African Poor*, p.212.

<sup>61</sup> TCSS, mins., 5<sup>th</sup> January 1957, TNA/540/1/78.

This was done in 1958.<sup>62</sup> Finally, echoing the proposals' of the Provincial Commissioner two decades earlier, '[i]t was agreed that an attempt should now be made to try to canalise the generosity of Muslims and others whose indiscriminate charity was having the effect of encouraging begging in the towns.'<sup>63</sup> However, little headway was made in the attempt to institutionalise alms-giving in order to exert greater control over Dar es Salaam's beggars. By the end of the colonial period, whilst growing numbers of indigents were making their way to the capital, the official response was much the same as it had been for the past two decades. The police, the Municipality and the native administration cooperated in the periodic removal of 'the various beggars who were infesting the streets [who] would be summoned to the Local Courts... so that a decision could be made as to whether they should be maintained by the Government in the Nunge Pauper Camp or be repatriated to their home districts, if they do not belong to Dar es Salaam.'<sup>64</sup> This was, as ever, a makeshift solution. It was simply a matter of time before indigents drifted back to the town and the whole process had to be started over. A lasting solution to the forces driving the destitute and the disabled to mendicancy in the capital was beyond the capacity of the colonial state.

### **Delinquency in Dar es Salaam, 1919-1961**

Unruly adolescents formed another group whose presence in town officials deplored. They included unaccompanied youth who made their way to Dar es Salaam from the rural areas, as well as the troublesome offspring of town-dwelling parents. The growing number of crimes committed by young offenders first came to be regarded with special concern by the administration in the early 1930s. Crime figures from 1928 and 1929 had revealed a 'disturbing increase in the incidence of juvenile crime'.<sup>65</sup> The phenomenon was blamed on the growth of vagrancy in the territory.<sup>66</sup> In Dar es Salaam the usual response to such a state of affairs was to repatriate young vagrants to their area of origin. Frequently those sent home returned to the capital, however.<sup>67</sup> In other cases repatriation proved impracticable. When, in 1931, the District Commissioner looked into the

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<sup>62</sup> See TCSS mins., TNA/540/1/78.

<sup>63</sup> TCSS, mins., 24<sup>th</sup> March 1958, TNA/540/1/78.

<sup>64</sup> MC, mins., 17<sup>th</sup> February 1961.

<sup>65</sup> 'Imprisonment', Appendix D.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

background of several boys who had been brought to him by Dar es Salaam police for repatriation, he found himself in a quandary:

On investigation I have found these boys claimed to have been brought by their parents from other districts when they were very young and that they now have no parents living and do not know of the existence of any relatives. To repatriate these lads did not seem to me to be a practicable solution. To whom are they to go? What are they to do? They are a problem.

It was, wrote the DC, 'not desirable to leave them to grow in Dar es Salaam.' For parent-less juveniles in town were vulnerable to a descent into criminality:

They thieve to obtain the wherewithal to live, and they are tools of habitual criminals who teach them the trade and relieve them of the proceeds of the theft, very often paying the toto a few cents and getting off with the swag themselves, leaving the youth to get off with caning if subsequently detected and convicted.

These homeless waifs and strays become the catspaws of adult rogues and swell the numbers of the criminal class.<sup>68</sup>

By this time, however, there had already emerged in Dar es Salaam juvenile gangs who appeared quite capable of operating independently of adult mentors. In his 1931 report, Baker noted the presence of 'particularly impudent' groups of youths who were known collectively as the *kompania ya sinzia*; *kuwevi sinzia* being Swahili for the method used by thieves who stole whilst one of their number distracted the victim.<sup>69</sup> According to Baker, the youths would

mark down a man with money, notes or perhaps a watch in his possession. One of the band will either abstract the valuable from the pocket of the victim or grasp the latter round the arms while another does so. In either case the booty is at once passed on to a second and often a third confederate and when the case is brought up it is merely the word of the victim against that of the original thief.<sup>70</sup>

Baker noted that, in true delinquent fashion, their 'amusement after dark [wa]s to annoy the respectable members of the community by acts of discourtesy, assaults or petty thefts'.<sup>71</sup> 'An editorial on hooliganism (*uhuni*) in *Kwetu* later in the decade complained of young trouble-makers '[n]o longer subject to the influence of their parents.' 'Among them,' the editorial observed, painting an almost Dickensian scene, 'will be found a fair

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<sup>67</sup> See Statistics of juvenile offenders for 1934 in PRO/CO/691/144/7.

<sup>68</sup> DAR for 1931, p.20, TNA/53.4.

<sup>69</sup> The definition is from the *Standard Swahili Dictionary*.

<sup>70</sup> Baker, 'Social Conditions', p.93.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, p.70.

percentage of tax-dodgers, street ruffians, pickpockets, as well as our best athletes... Most of the petty thefts are committed by them; they are suborned by weaker men to fight out their differences with other people, and they rob our children.'<sup>72</sup> They also victimised Indian residents of the town; snatching jewellery from women and children and harassing shopkeepers in Zones II and III, and mugging lone pedestrians in the early evenings. In 1938, sixty-six Indian retailers from the New Market area wrote a letter to the *Tanganyika Herald* to complain of their activities:

For the last three months we are being harassed in broad daylight in our shops as well as in streets, by five or six gangs of loafers: and on being approached, the Police are showing their unwillingness to apprehend them: they are replying that they could do something if we ourselves caught them and brought them to the police.

#### How they steal?

As you are aware, it is almost impossible for shopkeepers to leave their shops and chase thieves. The method employed by them is that one of them comes to a shop which is surrounded by a crowd of customers: takes with his own hand whatever article he finds within his reach: passes it to another member of his gang who goes away to be at large and he remains there a while having no proof of his skilful act.

#### Show of knives

In these circumstances and in the absence of Police it is very difficult to catch any one of them. If an attempt is made by either by the shopkeeper or his man to chase the thief he is prevented from doing by other members of the gang. It also happens so that in order to help them accomplice members of the gang make assault on the shopkeeper who goes after the running loafer and in that event he loses articles and is beaten for nothing.<sup>73</sup>

At the end of the day, the retailers complained, the youths would keep up their mischief by throwing stones at Indians' houses late into the night.

The gangs contained up to 60 individuals, and their size was increasing. According to police records, forty eight of their number had had dealings with the police in 1937, of whom forty three had convictions recorded against them that year. Their ages and backgrounds were varied. The Commissioner of Police informed the Chief Secretary that some of the *kompania ya sinzia*

are orphans while others are boys who have run away from home, children who have been neglected and abandoned, and those over whom parents can exercise no control. Their ages average between 8 and 18 years, and they are comparable to the 'street arabs' to be found in any city in the world. With the exception of six who have homes in Dar es Salaam, the

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<sup>72</sup> *Kwetu*, 21st Feb.1939. Quoted in D.H.Anthony, 'Culture and Society', p.159/60.

<sup>73</sup> *TH*, 11<sup>th</sup> May 1938.



remainder have no regular abode, sleep anywhere they can find shelter and obtain food in any way they can.<sup>74</sup>

The backgrounds of individual gang members were described by the Commissioner of Police. Seven were Zaramo, one was Makonde, one Tivi, one Ngindo, one Doe and one Nyamwezi. The youngest, Juma Nassoro was a 12 year old Tivi youth, whose father was working as a tailor in Ruvu (a railway town west of Dar es Salaam) and who had been abandoned by his mother in Dar es Salaam after she went off with another man. He was, according to the Commissioner, 'a precocious child and leader of a small gang' who had been dealt with many times by the police. In contrast, the eldest, Nasib Salim, who was 25 years old, from Bagamoyo and had no living relatives, was considered 'of weak intellect'. He had eight previous convictions. The others were aged between 16 and 19 years. Some had parents living in Dar es Salaam or in the rural part of the district, others had relatives there or in neighbouring districts, whilst others had no living relatives.

Officials had difficulty devising a response to the problem of crime amongst Tanganyikan youth. In their 1932 report, members of the committee on imprisonment in the territory, troubled by evidence that 'frequently children are deliberately employed by thieves and rogues',<sup>75</sup> had recommended that a reformatory be established to 'reclaim' convicted juveniles and to prevent them entering the schools of crime that many took the prisons to be. An approved school was eventually opened at Kazima, near Tabora, in 1938, after initial opposition by London on financial grounds.<sup>76</sup> The 1932 report also recommended more use of corporal punishment in place of prison sentences. Judging by surviving breakdowns of juvenile crime in the 1930s this advice appears to have been partially acted upon.<sup>77</sup> Up to twelve strokes with a 'light rattan cane' were commonly administered. Contrary to the report's recommendations, however, these were often reinforced by short terms of imprisonment.

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<sup>74</sup> CP to CS, 13<sup>th</sup> May 1938, TNA/21963/Vol.1.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Memo. in PRO/CO691/132/6.

<sup>77</sup> The ages, offences and sentences received by young offenders for 1934-36 can be found in PRO/CO691/144/7, CO691/149/42086 & CO691/155/42086.

Whilst the Kazima approved school had some early success with its inmates,<sup>78</sup> these initiatives proved to have little impact on the problem of delinquency in the Tanganyikan capital. In 1942, the Superintendent of Police warned the Provincial Commissioner:

There still remains... the problem of unemployable youths, who with some precocious youngsters as hangers-on, band themselves into small groups and pester the bazaar and native residential areas. They are mentally unoccupied and by being semi-sophisticated are ripe for any mischief that presents itself from stone-throwing to shoplifting. They are most difficult to control and by their association with bad influences present both a social as well as a police problem which will have to be faced.<sup>79</sup>

The following year it was estimated there were in Dar es Salaam 'about 2,000 young scamps, living on their wits and without any form of parental or other control.'<sup>80</sup> Baker counselled that to have any chance of solving the problem three measures needed to be taken. Child labour had to be prohibited in the town. All parent-less children in Dar es Salaam were to be removed and the town was to become a restricted area into which children could not enter. Meanwhile, those children who remained in the town should be made to attend school compulsorily.<sup>81</sup> Whilst child labour was prohibited the same year, London opposed introduction of controls over movement within the territory, and there were never enough resources devoted to education in Dar es Salaam to establish compulsory school attendance. The problem of delinquency refused to go away.

By the early 1950s it had emerged once again, according to a quarterly police report, as 'the problem of major importance'.<sup>82</sup> In 1952, the Labour department estimated that there were as many as 10,000 children and juveniles in the town without a parent or guardian (although this is surely an over-estimate).<sup>83</sup> Leslie, in his survey of the African areas four years later, uncovered further evidence of 'freedom from parental discipline'. 38 per cent of all children between the ages of 6 and 15 were found to have no father in town, while 29 per cent had neither parent (the proportions were as high as 45 per cent and 34 per cent in the central suburb of Kariakoo).<sup>84</sup> Leslie detected signs in Dar es Salaam of 'the revolt of the adolescent, in age and in culture, against the authority of

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<sup>78</sup> Up to 1943, of the 44 boys discharged from the school just 4 had re-offended. Memo attached as App. III to PC's conference mins. 1943, p.13, TNA/61/702/3.

<sup>79</sup> SP to PC, EP, 20<sup>th</sup> February 1942, TNA/61/3/XVI.

<sup>80</sup> PC's conference mins. 1943, p.13, TNA 61/702/3.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Extracts from QPR(Tanganyika) in TNA/540/22/3.

<sup>83</sup> Labour Dept. AR for 1952, p.41.

<sup>84</sup> Leslie, *Survey*, p.244.

elders, of the superior and the supercilious.' He found successors to the *kompania ya sinzia* in 'the groups and the gangs who occasionally defy administrative authority, and in their lifelong struggle to avoid paying tax are waging an unceasing though usually personal and defensive battle of wits with the *Jumbes* and the police.'<sup>85</sup> Ironically, it was a combination of both action and inaction with regard to Baker's recommendations a decade earlier that was contributing to the incidence of juvenile crime. Thanks to the shortage of school places, boys who did not make the grade were leaving school after Standard VI, aged eleven, four years before they could legally obtain employment. According to a 1954 police report, they found themselves 'thrown on the streets... and for three or four years they are at a loose end with nothing to do but learn the 'tricks of the trade''.<sup>86</sup> DC Harris urged that in tackling delinquency 'priority should be given to the building of middle schools to receive as many Standard VI leavers as possible.'<sup>87</sup> The Assistant Commissioner of Police meanwhile, was stressing the 'need for a Remand Home in Dar es Salaam for children and young persons who have fallen foul of the law and who, at present, constitute something of an embarrassment for all who have to deal with them.'<sup>88</sup>

Despite the substantial growth of the town and the consequent increase in the number of youths to be found there, however, delinquency did not appear to be the problem it was in the 1930s. 'Having regard to the size of Dar es Salaam and the absence of social services responsible for neglected juveniles,' the Assistant Commissioner of Police wrote in 1955, 'the amount of crime attributable to this class of the community is by no means excessive.'<sup>89</sup> 'A number of African youths do come in from the districts in search of work and these men are somewhat of a problem to the Administration', the same official noted the following year, 'although this view cannot, as yet, be shared by the Police.'<sup>90</sup> In an informal survey in 1956, the probation office interviewed 160 children believed to be of school age who were encountered on the streets and open spaces between 2pm and 4pm over the course of a week. As many as 112 of these children were found to be living with parents (frequently one parent only, though), and a further 38 were staying with their relations. Just 10 were 'living rough'. Meanwhile, 115 of the 160 were receiving some

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., p.112.

<sup>86</sup> QPR, Dsm Dist., 1<sup>st</sup> October-31<sup>st</sup> December 1954, TNA/90/1011/Vol.1.

<sup>87</sup> DC Harris' comments, 19<sup>th</sup> March 1955, on QPR(Tanganyika), TNA/540/22/3.

<sup>88</sup> Snr.Asst CP, Dsm to DC, Dsm, 8<sup>th</sup> January 1958, TNA/540/22/3.

<sup>89</sup> QPR, Dsm Dist., 1<sup>st</sup> October-31<sup>st</sup> December 1955, TNA/90/1011/Vol.1.

form of schooling.<sup>91</sup> 'I am satisfied', wrote the Commissioner for Social Development in response to the survey, 'that with the exception of the children found to be 'living rough' there is very little child neglect in the true sense.' '[T]hough', he added, 'many children are getting near to the state of being classified as being beyond the control of their parents.'<sup>92</sup>

It is hard to pinpoint exactly why the situation in Dar es Salaam had improved since the 1930s, or at least had not deteriorated considering the huge increase in the urban population. The Kazima approved school, which by the early 1950s was dealing with a daily average of around 200 offenders ranging in age from 8 to 18, appears to have had some impact on delinquency.<sup>93</sup> On their return to Dar es Salaam 'a good deal of trouble' was taken over discharged inmates from the school by district officials.<sup>94</sup> Often they were helped to find employment to prevent their returning to crime. Within two weeks of their release in February 1947, for example, Ali bin Hassan and Hamisi bin Hassan had, thanks to the efforts of the district office, been taken on as carpenters in the PWD; Mohamed bin Selemani and Rashidi bin Swedi had joined the Kings African Rifles; Selemani bin Hamisi and Juma bin Abdallah had become registered labourers; and three others had been given chits to assist them in obtaining employment. Of the discharged inmates only Saleh bin Selemani, who had been given a trial by the PWD, had proved to be 'a bad egg'.<sup>95</sup> 'The criterion of any school is the type of boy turned out', the Commissioner of Prisons noted with satisfaction two years later, 'I cannot overemphasize how impressed I am with the ex-Approved School boys keenness, good outlook and above all, their spirit of independence and confidence in themselves.'<sup>96</sup> Indeed, Kazima's successes had filtered down to African parents. In 1944 Asmani Juma Muna, a government clerk living in Dar es Salaam, sought to have his son committed to Kazima:

My son Ramadhani Athmani Juma, who is about 15 years, is leading a very notorious conduct. He has the habit of being away from home... I have instructed him so many times and even punishments but no sign of changing. Moreover I have taken up the same case with the local *Jumbe* Mohamed Sultani who alternatively took the real advice on this boy but merely he despised of and ran away as a rascal young chap.

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<sup>90</sup> Asst.CP, Dsm to CP, 9<sup>th</sup> March 1956, TNA/90/1011/Vol.1.

<sup>91</sup> Cmmr. for Soc. Devt. to TCSS, 15<sup>th</sup> December 1956, TNA/540/1/78.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Prison ARs 1950-53.

<sup>94</sup> Report of PCs' conference, 1943, PRO/CO/691/184/42397.

<sup>95</sup> Supt., Kazima to DC, Dsm 14<sup>th</sup> February 1947; and note dated 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1947, TNA/540/22/3.

<sup>96</sup> Cmmr. for Prisons to CS, 31st August 1949, TNA/28692.

...He is my real son, a son amongst others. For his bad example I am afraid he may scandalize the rest and turn up my happy family to be dark one. There is immigration of the school children of such boys, I heard, to somewhere, I here too would take consul to recommend for him.<sup>97</sup>

The following week Muna's son was sent to Tabora. Records survive of another anxious parent requesting the removal of his offspring to the school. In 1950 Dominico Sakatu, a junior Municipal Health Office employee, wrote to the District Commissioner:

My son is a problem having been thrown out of schools in Dar es Salaam and Ufipa... I have made up my mind to take him to Kazima School, Tabora. Rashid, a fellow worker of mine had some troubles with his son and Thomas Plantan too... [They sent their sons to Kazima.]

Mr. Rashid is back and making wonderful progress at his new school. The two sons of Plantan are still there and have begun to improve in class-work and character.<sup>98</sup>

Offloading troublesome sons appears not to have been uncommon amongst educated Africans living in Dar es Salaam. For all its achievements, however, Kazima hadn't the resources or the staff to provide a true solution to the problem of delinquency in Dar es Salaam. In 1943 Commissioner Brown had recommended the need to build 'a second school, on the lines of Kazima, to cope with the congestion now existing there.'<sup>99</sup> After his tour of Tanganyika in 1951, W.H. Chinn, the Social Welfare Advisor to the Colonial Office, noting that the facilities at Kazima (and its location) were sorely lacking, advised 'the need for more than one approved school... [which] institutions should be sited within easy reach of the main centres of population from which most cases will come.'<sup>100</sup> It was not until 1958, however, that a new institution for young offenders was opened at Malindi, near Dar es Salaam. It had accommodation for 400 boys and was according to Chinn, who saw it in the process of being built in 1956, 'a fantastic institution'.<sup>101</sup> Despite the scale of the operation at Malindi though, the ability of the prisons department to process young offenders still did not expand to the extent that many had considered necessary, as by then the original approved school at Kazima had been closed down.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Asmani Juma Muna to DC, Dsm, 12<sup>th</sup> January 1944, TNA/540/22/3.

<sup>98</sup> Dominico Sakatu to DC, Dsm, 27<sup>th</sup> November 1950.

<sup>99</sup> Report of PCs' conference, 1943, PRO/CO/691/184/42397.

<sup>100</sup> Report on a tour of Tanganyika by W.H. Chinn, 1951, PRO/CO/822/675.

<sup>101</sup> Extract from report by Chinn in mins. of a meeting of the Committee. on the Treatment of Young Offenders in the Colonies, 18<sup>th</sup> December 1956, PRO/CO/822/1169.

<sup>102</sup> It had been closed in 1954, from then up to the opening of Malindi the approved school was housed at

Whilst Kazima and its successor may have taken some credit for the relative lack of delinquency in Dar es Salaam in the 1950s, there were more likely factors at work in the capital itself. The first of these was the introduction of a probation office in 1950, established in part as a means of punishing young offenders without exposing them to prison life. In 1953 it dealt with 97 probationers under the age of 21. By the end of the decade this had increased to 221; not an insubstantial number.<sup>103</sup> The close supervision under which offenders were placed was sure to have had some sort of impact on the incidence of juvenile crime, although without detailed statistics it is impossible to know how great this was. The final factor likely to have been responsible for the relative lack of delinquency was the huge escalation in campaigns against undesirables –*wahuni* raids– that occurred in the 1950s. Even before this escalation, youths in Dar es Salaam who had no parents or relatives living in the town were frequently repatriated to their home areas. For those organising the raids in the 1950s this section of the population represented one of their main targets. However, whilst we know that large numbers of Africans were being removed from Dar es Salaam by this time, there is no surviving breakdown by age of those repatriated. One can only speculate on the proportion of youths that were ejected from the town. It is likely that they formed a large proportion, perhaps even a majority. This in turn may help explain why delinquency had not become more of a problem in the capital.

### **Riot and the breakdown of order**

European and Indian concerns over the African urban presence were at their peak after the occasional outbreaks of disorder which periodically occurred in Dar es Salaam. Whilst crime against property and petty bye-law offences were easily the commonest forms of crime in the town, riot was by far the most explosive and threatening. The causes of such outbreaks were manifold. Most commonly they could be characterised as ethnic violence, though disorder was also associated with strikes and, towards the end of the period under consideration, with the rising anti-colonial sentiment which emerged in the town.

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Mkono wa Mara prison, Kingolwira.

The best documented outbreaks of ethnic violence are those which occurred in Uhindi in the inter-war period. The first of these appears to have taken place as early as 1918, although no reference to it survives other than in a 1932 *Tanganyika Herald* editorial bemoaning the high level of crime in the area which states: 'We do not think the authorities have forgotten the 1918 bazaar loot.'<sup>104</sup> That this breakdown of order was referred to fourteen years after it had taken place –and when similar, though presumably less serious, incidents had occurred in between- indicates that it was fresh in the minds of at least one section of Dar es Salaam's population, and presumably testifies to the severity of what had taken place. Unfortunately, it was not until the 1920s that the first Indian newspapers were established in Dar es Salaam, whilst the first surviving district report dates back to 1919-20, so we are left with just this oblique reference from 1932. An impression of what occurred, however, can perhaps be gained from details of later outbreaks of violence between Africans and Indians which received prominent –and doubtless somewhat sensationalised- coverage in the Indian press. In one such case in 1929 the *Herald* complained of a 'Reign of lawlessness' in which a 'native mob' 150 strong (the police estimate was 100) terrorised the Indian community in Ring Street between nine and ten pm on a Saturday night in December. A description of events gives an impression of significant tension existing between Indians and Africans in the town:

A group of some three or four natives were passing near an Indian shop. They were drunk. They found some Indian children playing in the street. They slapped some of the little boys and began to abuse their parents. They lost all control over their tongues and went further in that the whole community became the subject of their filthy language. Some Indians came out and requested these loafers to shut their mouth; but they would not. The latter lost their temper and began to show their strength. With the exchange of few blows both the parties dispersed.

A few minutes afterwards they came back and challenged Indians to come out and fight. The latter gave no reply. That encouraged the native ringleaders to work their plans. The mob had come prepared and equipped with stones and sticks. They rushed on every Indian house and every Indian passer-by in the vicinity and took command of the field. Whistles were blown, but it was not until half an hour that police assistance was available. Whistles served the purpose of drawing attention of neighbours who began to amass on the scene. But their assistance proved of no avail. The native mob was divided into groups of four or five persons having scattered in many directions so as to meet outside people coming to help Indians. Many Indians were hit with stones and sticks as they approached the spot. One Indian was hit with heavy sticks till he fell down unconscious and his pocket was emptied by a group of natives in a corner on the scene. Windows and doors of many houses were broken and a number of persons were seriously injured. The mob had controlled the

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<sup>103</sup> Prison ARs for 1953 and 1959.

<sup>104</sup> *TH*, 4<sup>th</sup> June 1932, p.8.



Map 6. *Central Dar es Salaam, 1941* (note: Uhindini lies between Ingles Street, Acacia Avenue and the Open Space; Kisutu is to the north of Uhindini)

Source: A. Gibb & Partners, "A Plan for Dar es Salaam"



situation in such a systematic way that all avenues from where outside help could be expected were closed for nearly half an hour.<sup>105</sup>

The *Herald* hints that there was more to the violence than simple racial animosity. “‘Wacha huyu muhindi, piga huyu baniani’”<sup>106</sup> were the only two sentences the members of the mob used to exchange between themselves whenever they saw any Indian passing between them,’ the paper reported. *Baniani* is the Swahili for non-Muslim (or Christian), ie. Hindu, Indians.<sup>107</sup>

The next serious outbreak of violence in Uhindini, in November 1937, also occurred in Ring Street. The immediate origins of the disturbance lay in a shopkeepers attempts ‘to chase a thief and developed into a riot of a very serious nature as crowds of natives began to swell.’<sup>108</sup> For forty five minutes that afternoon chaos reigned in the area around Ring Street:

Indian shops were raided and several people are reported to have been injured in the affrays that took place in the beginning.

For the first half hour the whole street became flooded with truculent natives and it looked as if a riot of a very dangerous nature was developing.

Indian children, who had poured into the street, were freely beaten by natives who had sticks in their hands.

The spirit ran very high when it became known to the rowdy gangs that the efforts of the people to obtain police protection had gone in vain.

At about a quarter past three one Indian youth, who was passing on this street, was knocked down and beaten by a furious mob. He managed to find shelter in Mr. Manshuklal’s shop.

The rowdy mob could not tolerate the escape of its prey and soon stones and empty bottles rained down on the shop.

...The mob then turned its activities in the opposite direction.

Ambika Hindu Hotel was raided. Nearly fifty natives rushed with sticks and stones... and broke doors and windows.

...About five o’clock the situation was well in hand and by seven peace was restored.<sup>109</sup>

Although serious outbreaks of violence were few and far between, the potential for them appeared always to be present in Uhindini. Indian communities in smaller upcountry towns within Dar es Salaam district were also victims of violence. In February 1938, the ‘Indian Public’ of Soga requested ‘that adequate police protection be granted them against the local natives who have now acquired the habit of being rowdy and

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<sup>105</sup> *TH*, 18<sup>th</sup> December 1929, in TNA/13986.

<sup>106</sup> Tr.: ‘Leave this *Muhindi*, hit this *Baniani*’.

<sup>107</sup> *Standard Swahili-English Dictionary*.

<sup>108</sup> *TH*, 13th November 1937, p.7.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid*.

quarrelsome on the slightest pretext.<sup>110</sup> The following month Indian residents of Ruvu wrote to the Commissioner of Police asking for a police station to be established there:

As the natives of this place have become so daring that they insult and beat Indians of this town even at their own shops, consequently we have become greatly alarmed at this state of affairs, we feel that our life and property is always at stake.<sup>111</sup>

The Commissioner felt the danger exaggerated and suggested that the weekly patrol conducted from Dar es Salaam provided adequate protection. Commenting upon the case, however, the editor of the *Tanganyika Opinion* saw fit to disagree, claiming that '[a]n askari who appears to have been detailed the area once a week is stated to be too fond of *pombe* to resist being thrashed by his warsail [sic] comrades.'<sup>112</sup>

Between the wars, Indians in Dar es Salaam seemed constantly to be anxious about the threat of violence or theft perpetrated by 'gangs of natives'. After a scuffle between Africans and the police had occurred on Kitchwele Street in 1939, for example, Indian shopkeepers were reported to be 'fearing rioting as in their opinion such disturbances created by hooligans generally develop into rioting if not suppressed at once.'<sup>113</sup> Police officials at the time tended to discount the potential dangers.<sup>114</sup> That the Indian response was not unduly alarmist, however, is supported by testimony from the Commissioner of Police, who, in the early 1950s –when there was a significantly larger police presence in the town- warned the Chief Secretary that in Dar es Salaam it was indeed easy for a riot to develop in a matter of minutes.<sup>115</sup> The Commissioner was writing in response to a serious fracas between Arabs and Africans that had occurred in Magomeni in April 1952. An argument had arisen after an African had struck a cat belonging to an Arab shopkeeper, found sprawling asleep on foodstuffs exposed for sale. Fighting broke out resulting in the injury of several Arabs and Africans, two of whom were hospitalised. 'The Arabs and Africans at Magomeni', a secretariat official pointed out, 'have not been on the best of terms for some time.'<sup>116</sup> Bad blood between the two communities resulted in further violence the following month, when a fight between 150 Africans and 'at least

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<sup>110</sup> Sec., Indian Association to CS, 28<sup>th</sup> February 1938, TNA/21062.

<sup>111</sup> Letter signed by 17 Indians from Ruvu to CP, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1938, TNA/21062.

<sup>112</sup> *TO*, 25<sup>th</sup> July(1938?) in TNA/21062

<sup>113</sup> *TH*, 18<sup>th</sup> February 1939, p.8.

<sup>114</sup> For eg. CP to CS, 11<sup>th</sup> May 1938, TNA/21963/Vol.1.

<sup>115</sup> CP to CS, 21<sup>st</sup> April 1952, TNA/50075.

<sup>116</sup> Sec. Min., 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1952, TNA/50075.

seven' Arabs was reported in the *Standard*.<sup>117</sup> The tinder that sparked the fire this time was an Arab shopkeeper purportedly trying to swindle an African out of Sh.1/-. In the same year, violence was reported at football matches in which African spectators physically threatened the non-African side. On one occasion, the *Standard* recorded that '[s]everal hundred Africans stormed on to the football ground and set about the Agakhan eleven and their handful of supporters with feet, fists, stones and sticks.'<sup>118</sup>

Notwithstanding such isolated incidents, few serious outbreaks of ethnic violence were reported in the period between 1945 and independence. This may simply reflect the different news priorities of the settler press (Indian newspapers from after 1948 are unavailable). It may reflect an increased police presence acting as a deterrent against such outbreaks. On the other hand, it may be taken as a sign that there actually had been some improvements in relations between Dar es Salaam's ethnically –and racially- diverse communities. In his survey, written in the closing years of colonial rule, Leslie portrayed African relations with other races as being at worst ambivalent:

many dislike 'the Arab' because, they say, he is hot-tempered, quarrelsome and overbearing; on the other hand there is a great deal of respect remaining, particularly in the older generation, for the older type of Arab, recalling the days when Arabs were the ruling caste. Similarly 'the Indian' is often said to be crafty, overbearing and contemptuous: yet by comparison with Arabs many find them more quietly behaved, though perhaps less accessible. Europeans most of all have the reputation of being too proud to see the earth beneath their feet: in all three cases the language barrier is the great divider.<sup>119</sup>

Leslie observed that 'the European's love of segregating himself increases the feeling that he is over-proud.' On the other hand there was a degree of 'friction generated between African and both Indian and Arab whom he sees all day, in the areas surveyed, usually at a disadvantage.'

It is possible that tensions did ease in the post-war period. However, two of the most serious eruptions of violence to have occurred in Dar es Salaam in the 1950s *can* quite plausibly be attributed to the persistence of such tensions, although in both cases the incidents were blamed on the fear of *mumiani* – a local superstition involving the abduction of individuals who had their blood removed for use as a medicine. The disturbances took place in Buguruni, an unplanned African residential area to the west of

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<sup>117</sup> TS, 10.5.52, p.17.

<sup>118</sup> TS, 19.8.52, p.19.

the town centre, at either end of the 1950s. The first occurred on a Tuesday evening in January 1950, when, according to Provincial Commissioner Walden, 'a house occupied by two elderly non-British Europeans was stoned and attempts to set it on fire were made by a mob of several hundred Africans.' 'This mob', he continued

gathered at an obviously pre-arranged meeting place and marched to the house in question, which belongs to an Indian who has leased it to these Europeans and is in an area which has been scheduled for African housing. The mob over-turned the motorcar belonging to the occupants of the house, ripped the tyres to pieces, smashed all the glass in the car and tore open the cushions. But for the arrival of the Police, it is the opinion of the Superintendent that the mob, having once gained ingress into the house, would undoubtedly have murdered the occupants.<sup>120</sup>

Walden attributed this incident to 'the vexed question of availability of land for Africans to build in the township', due to the fact that the land in question was earmarked for Africans but little had been done about instituting government policy in this area. The word from the African community, on the other hand, was that fear of *mumiani* had caused the attack, after recent murders in the Keko area had been blamed on an unknown European. Whatever the motives for resorting to violence were, it was clear that Africans in the area were not comfortable with a European presence there. 'It has been said', Walden observed, 'that occupation of this house by any European would not be tolerated, but such opposition would not apply to an Indian or African.' A reporter for the *Tanganyika Standard* appeared to concur with this analysis. He reacted with dismay at events in Buguruni. 'The driving out of this European family', he wrote, 'was considered a very serious matter as it had led to the African believing that his concentrated action had been successful - successful in removing Europeans from an area in which natives did not wish them to live.'<sup>121</sup>

As it turned out suspicion appeared to attach itself to whoever occupied this house, regardless of racial origin. A recurrence of *mumiani* fears led to particularly serious disturbances when an African was living in the same house nine years later. Once again, according to African testimony, the violence was linked to the disappearance or murder of several Africans in the town.<sup>122</sup> This time rioting involving plantation *askaris*, three

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<sup>119</sup> Leslie, *Survey*, p.280.

<sup>120</sup> PC, EP to MLG, 28<sup>th</sup> January 1950, TNA/50075.

<sup>121</sup> *TS*, 11<sup>th</sup> February 1950, p.15.

<sup>122</sup> See James R. Brennan, "Mumiani and Uhuru: Buguruni on the eve of Tanganyika's independence",

police officers and around two hundred Buguruni Africans, resulted in the death of one officer, the looting of a house and an Arab shop, and the destruction of a police patrol car. The same Indian-owned house that had been involved in the 1950 incident was also at the centre of the 1959 riot. In the later case, however, *mumiani* activities appear to have been blamed on the Indian owner rather than the African *askari*, Juma Mkuyu, living in the house at the time.<sup>123</sup> In both cases the events in Buguruni give some indication of the high degree of suspicion that could exist between different communities in Dar es Salaam, and of the potential for violence which could result from these tensions. The two disturbances involved attacks by Africans against individuals from each of the Tanganyika's three main immigrant communities: the original European residents, an Arab shopkeeper, and (indirectly) the Indian who owned the house.

Whilst ethnic factors appeared to be operating in Buguruni, an additional factor that ought to be taken into consideration in connection with the 1959 disturbances is the anti-colonial fervour sweeping Dar es Salaam's African communities at that time. Both the *Tanganyika Standard* and the Swahili weekly *Baragumu* reported that chants of 'uhuru' had accompanied the crowds' attacks against the Arab's shop and the police patrol car.<sup>124</sup> TANU, however, were quick to dissociate themselves from the events in Buguruni, so these events cannot be portrayed as a straightforward example of organised (or explicit) opposition to colonialism. They nevertheless took place at a time when British rule was losing its legitimacy. As early as 1955 Machado Plantan, the editor of the Swahili newspaper *Zuhra*, was receiving 'many reports of... people openly defying the law purporting to recognise TANU as the only authority capable to administer justice in the country.'<sup>125</sup> The disturbances at Buguruni fit in with a pattern of outbreaks of violence in the town which occurred as British authority was undermined by nationalist activism in the late colonial period. These incidents were often associated with the attempted arrest by police *askaris* of African malefactors. In the late-1950s policemen were frequently impeded by hostile crowds which rapidly materialised at the scene of an arrest. In August 1958, for example, around a hundred Africans attacked two detectives attempting to re-apprehend an escaped prisoner in Sikukuu Street.<sup>126</sup> The following June, in Ilala a crowd

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paper given at ASAC, 1998, for a full account of the riot.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., p.10

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., p.8.

<sup>125</sup> Said, *Abdulwahid Sykes*, p.178.

<sup>126</sup> *TS*, 9<sup>th</sup> August 1958.

of 50-60 persons obstructed the arrest of one Molidi Sultan, thus facilitating his escape.<sup>127</sup> The most serious incident of this kind, though, occurred in Msimbazi in September 1957, when a petty arrest degenerated into a minor riot. According to the Standard:

The riot started after the police arrived to investigate a disturbance at a *duka* owned by an Indian. When attempts to arrest a man failed, reinforcements were called for.

On the arrival of an inspector and six constables, a crowd of about 100 gathered at the shop. They became wild and tried to prevent the inspector reaching the wanted man. The inspector did, however, get the handcuffs on one of the wrists of the wanted man.

The duty officer, Assistant Superintendent A.S. Ross, was attacked by some of the crowd and his clothes were torn. He then sent for a platoon of the Motorised Company.

When Assistant Superintendent F.C.M. Walker arrived with the riot squad the crowd had grown to about 500. The crowd was warned and told to give up the wanted man, but stones were thrown at police.

The riot squad quickly went into action and made a baton charge. The crowd then dispersed to the other side of the Msimbazi market and picked up more stones, throwing them at the police as they advanced. It was not until seven smoke grenades had been thrown into the marketplace that the crowd dispersed.

An Assistant Superintendent received injuries to his arm from stones and an Inspector received minor abrasions, but no other casualties were reported.<sup>128</sup>

'Until the last three or four years', wrote the editor of the Standard in response to these events, 'there were no more friendly men or women in the whole of East or Central Africa than the average Tanganyika African. No matter where one went, or what one's race or religion, all greeted each other as friends with the familiar greeting of 'Jambo'. '(!) 'It is', he concluded, 'a different story in Dar es Salaam today.'<sup>129</sup> The growing racial tensions implied by the editor arose in a context of increasing disrespect for colonial authority and a diminishing reluctance on the part of Africans to oppose the often heavy-handed actions of the British and their agents. It is in this context, as Brennan has argued for the 1959 Buguruni riot, that we should place such outbreaks of violence in the late colonial period.

As we have seen both ethnic tensions in the town and growing disillusionment with government in the late colonial period could result in major disturbances. The two most serious breakdowns of order to have taken place in Dar es Salaam during the British colonial period, however, arose out of the labour disputes of 1947 and 1950. Whilst the violence that occurred can in both cases be seen as expressions of wider alienation, the

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<sup>127</sup> TS, 8<sup>th</sup> June 1959.

<sup>128</sup> TS, 26<sup>th</sup> September 1957, p.5.

<sup>129</sup> TS, 26<sup>th</sup> September 1957.

primary causes were economic grievances. In setting the context for the 1947 strike, Iliffe observes that '[t]his was probably the worst period in the town's history':

The population roughly doubled during the war, while the number of African houses actually fell slightly between June 1939 and July 1944. At the latter date there were sixteen water kiosks in the African town to serve an estimated 40,000 people. Before 1943, the immigrant worker was spared the burden of rising rent. Now rents doubled between 1943 and 1947... the government's casual labour rate kept pace with the official cost of living. However, necessary goods were increasingly either sold on the black market or were simply not available.<sup>130</sup>

Such was the backdrop to the dispute. The strike began on 6<sup>th</sup> September and escalated over the following days. 'For two days', wrote Norman Pearson a British trade unionist stationed in Dar es Salaam at the time, 'mobs ranged the town with their sticks and stones, and organised trade was grinding to a stop.'<sup>131</sup> By the 11<sup>th</sup> September, according to Iliffe, Dar es Salaam 'was dead... [t]he strike was general and pickets were out throughout the town.'<sup>132</sup> The violence and intimidation that accompanied the strike are attributed by Iliffe not to the workers who began the action but to unemployed Africans who joined in shortly after the dispute began.<sup>133</sup> That events took on the form of being more than just a straightforward labour dispute is confirmed by Pearson's first hand testimony:

[T]here were a number of unruly, lawless and excitedly impulsive mobs. These mobs were augmented by good-for-nothings who were not strikers, but joined in with the mobs merely for the licence of things and any pickings that may come by. The strike took on the nature of a gigantic spree, and the infection spread, and there were soon gangs of men having no connection at all with the dockers, and just taking advantage of what they thought was an opportunity not to be lost.

...Thus we found gangs of Africans rushing about the town brandishing sticks and stones. They considered that all Africans should join them in this grand saturnalia and show the Wazungu 'what was what'. Most joined only too willingly -after all, they thought, it isn't often one is able to get into the middle of a first class spree like this one- and they found it most exhilarating. Others were reluctant to leave their work -many of them were conscious that they had very good jobs which they did not wish to sacrifice- but threats of personal violence to them and their families usually brought them to heel. Unfortunately these threats were not always empty threats. Some Africans who did not want to strike hid themselves on their works premises (this applied particularly to domestic servants who lived on the premises), but the mobs searched for them and, on a few occasions, even invaded the privacy of the premises to do so.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Iliffe, "Dockworkers", p.131.

<sup>131</sup> Pearson, 'Safari', p.218.

<sup>132</sup> Iliffe, "Dockworkers", p.131.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid., p.132.

<sup>134</sup> Pearson, 'Safari', pp.215-217.

One such incident, at the East African Tobacco factory on the Pugu Road on the 10<sup>th</sup> September, was described by the manager of the factory in a letter to the Superintendent of Police:

At about one o'clock a gang of some 200 natives, mostly armed with sticks, passed from the front of our factory. They were shouting at our labourers to leave work, and threatening to beat them if they did not do so. Some of them also picked up pieces of our firewood lying outside the premises and banged our oil drums perhaps to bring home to our workers that their threats were forceful.

This unpleasant event shows that when our Factory labourers try to come for work tomorrow morning at 6am, there may occur serious trouble.

From what has happened today, we consider our property and ourselves to be unsafe tomorrow morning and we may have to close our Factory in face of such insecurity.<sup>135</sup>

The following day, despite 45 arrests being made and the presence of three hundred special constables patrolling the town, the dockers, according to Iliffe, 'still dominated the situation.'<sup>136</sup> Two days later 'little commercial activity' and 'no tangible improvement' were reported in the town.<sup>137</sup> Police patrols, though, were said to be 'beginning to have effect' and signs were that the strike was breaking. By Monday 15<sup>th</sup> September the situation was 'much improved'. After a meeting the previous day, dockers were drifting back to work, although interestingly casuals were reported to be 'returning better' than permanent employees.<sup>138</sup> All other labour –government and commercial- was back at work, including African civil servants, many of whom had participated in the strike.<sup>139</sup> The president of the African Association, though, made clear that the members of his organisation had played no part in originating or inciting '[t]his hooliganism [uhuni]'.<sup>140</sup> According to Pearson 'only the fairly-well educated Africans stood out against the mob hysterias which swept the town and the threats which accompanied it.'<sup>141</sup> What happened to those unemployed Africans who took part in the dispute is not recorded although a wave of repatriations occurred in the following months. As a result of the strike, the dockworkers and other Africans in the town won pay increases of

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<sup>135</sup> E. African Tobacco Co Ltd to SP, Dsm, 10<sup>th</sup> September 1947, TNA/540/27/13.

<sup>136</sup> Iliffe, "Dockworkers", p.132.

<sup>137</sup> PC, EP to Political, Dsm, 13<sup>th</sup> September 1947, TNA/540/27/13.

<sup>138</sup> CS to PC, EP, 15<sup>th</sup> September 1947, TNA/540/27/13.

<sup>139</sup> Iliffe, "Dockworkers", p.132.

<sup>140</sup> Quoted in Iliffe, *Modern History*, p.404. Whilst they may have disapproved of the violence once the strike spiralled out of control, the African Association did have a connection with the dispute through Abdulwahid Sykes (son of Kleist Sykes and the Association's Dar es Salaam secretary), who according to Said liased with 'the underground labour movement' in 1947. See Said, *Abdulwahid Sykes*, pp.60-67.



between thirty and fifty per cent. Government meanwhile, was served notice of the danger of combination between the disparate elements that made up the urban African population. The threat posed by a similar configuration in Mombasa the same year led, according to Cooper's analysis, eventually to a policy of the bureaucratisation and differentiation of African urban labour in Kenya.<sup>142</sup> In Dar es Salaam the official response did not occur until after a further outbreak of strike-related violence three years later.

The disturbances which took place in the course of the 1950 strike do not appear to have convulsed the whole town in the way that events in 1947 had. According to the Governor's Deputy those responsible were 'an insignificant portion of the dock labourers'. 'The vast majority of Africans living within the municipal area', he wrote, 'appear to dissociate themselves from any sympathy with the dock labourers who are regarded with disfavour as tainted with irresponsibility and hooliganism.'<sup>143</sup> The disturbances, however, were the most violent in the whole of the British colonial period, and judging by the large numbers of people involved it seems unlikely that disgruntled dockworkers had not been joined by other disaffected elements amongst the town population – prime candidates being, of course, those people dismissed by officials as spivs or *wahuni*. The origins of the strike lay in the introduction of a new gate for labourers entering the docks. The Port Authorities claimed this had no connection with the implementation of a registration scheme which was proposed to take place at a future date. Union leaders were convinced by these reassurances. The rank and file, on the other hand, remained deeply suspicious of the motivations behind the introduction of the new entry point, described in a *Tanganyika Standard* article in the wake of the strike:

The outer fence has only one main entrance, through which the workers will pass. Inside this, the men pass through another fence and finally go past the administrative buildings and down a stairway to reach the dock.<sup>144</sup>

It appears that dockworkers were right to be suspicious. Such a system greatly facilitated the control of dock labour, particularly when used in conjunction with the registration of

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<sup>141</sup> Pearson, 'Safari', p.219.

<sup>142</sup> Cooper, *Waterfront*.

<sup>143</sup> Governor's Dep. to Creech Jones, 11<sup>th</sup> February 1950, PRO/CO691/209/42540.

<sup>144</sup> *TS*, 20<sup>th</sup> Feb. 1950.

workers and issue of ID cards which occurred immediately after the disastrous events of February 1950.<sup>145</sup>

In the period leading up to the strike, dockers' attitudes towards registration had been divided. According to the Deputy Governor, registration had actually been encouraged by union leaders in the late 1940s in order 'to protect old established dockworkers whose position seemed threatened by continued demands for and increasing numbers of casual labourers arising from continued pressure of work at the port during the past two years.'<sup>146</sup> 'These casual labourers', wrote the Deputy Governor,

largely comprise the less responsible element, desiring to work only perhaps once or twice a week and laying up for the remainder. This element gradually gained control of the Union and was opposed to measures favouring permanent employment and insistence on comparatively regular attendance.<sup>147</sup>

With the advent of the new entry procedure in late January 1950, union members overruled their leaders, who had recommended acceptance.<sup>148</sup> They were forced to declare a strike on 1<sup>st</sup> February. Support was by no means total (the port labour force was not completely unionised), with at least 330 labourers working in the port on the first day of the strike, and as many as 783 on the second. The large number of strike-breakers gives some clue to the obvious frustration felt by those who had opted to strike. This, along with the determination of the police to avoid strikers intimidation of those who chose to work, led to the eventual resort to violence. On 2<sup>nd</sup> February, the Secretary of the Stevedores and Dockworkers Union wrote a letter to the Chief Secretary, articulating the frustration of the strikers and predicting that disturbances would occur:

Union Members refused to pass though in the new gate mentioned, however, in stoping [sic] trouble the Union representatives approached the Senior Superintendent Police, in charge, that whether permission can be gallanted to stop the Union Members to go on duty, however, the Police stated that there is no rule that some people can be stoped going on duty, however, still the Policemen use to get hold of people through the dock area, therefore, the Union is only forwarding this letter to you for information, that surely there will be some great troubles amongst whole Africans of Dar es Salaam as they are fighting for their colour, should not wonder when the matter appears.<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> TS, 20<sup>th</sup> Feb. 1950.

<sup>146</sup> Dep.Gov. to CO, 7<sup>th</sup> February 1950.

<sup>147</sup> For tensions between Union members and leadership in the late-1940s, see Said, *Abdulwahid Sykes*, pp.70-77.

<sup>148</sup> Internal report in PRO/CO691/209/42540.

<sup>149</sup> Sec., SDU to CS, 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1950, PRO/CO/691/209/42450.

A second letter, presented the following day (presumably written earlier), adopted a significantly more threatening tone:

I am directed by all Union Members to inform you that as far as the matter effect that, the Policemen of Dar es Salaam, and their Police Officers interferes with the Dock Labourers Strike and try to fight the Labourers of the Dockworkers Union, therefore, there will be a heavy fight this morning or afternoon between the Policemen and the Union Members, however, this will be for all Africans in Dar es Salaam, all ranks of Africans will be fought while found going on duty.<sup>150</sup>

This was indeed what came to pass. Early on the morning of 3<sup>rd</sup> February pickets at the harbour entrance were being moved on or arrested by the police.<sup>151</sup> Those arrested were found to be carrying concealed weapons including knives, axes, iron bars, bottles and clubs. The arrests appeared to aggravate strikers congregating at the harbour:

At about 7.00 am in the vicinity of the port a party of men attacked Assistant Superintendent Stewart with a blow from behind. In the melee which followed a number of policemen and rioters received injuries. Eight arrests were made and loiterers were then cleared from the dock entrance. Information was received that those dispersed had retired to collect re-inforcements and arm themselves with weapons with which to fight the police, attack their barracks and release arrested persons. The situation in the dock area appeared calm and patrols were sent to detect any concentration of rioters elsewhere.

Reports of such a concentration came in at 8.25am. A patrol car was despatched and, according to an internal report, was stoned 'by a disorderly crowd estimated at some 2,000 men' –the estimate of the *Tanganyika Standard* was a more plausible 400 to 600– at the corners of Mkunguni Street and Pemba Street<sup>152</sup> at Mnazi Mmoja. A request was sent for reinforcements. After their arrival a force of 36 constables armed with long batons and shields, and three officers armed with service revolvers and ammunition, faced an increasingly hostile crowd 'armed with clubs, knives, pangas and rocks.' According to the internal report:

The party was stoned at a range of some thirty yards and several constables were injured. Assistant Superintendent Stewart warned the crowd that if it did not desist he would have to shoot. They continued to attack and the two Assistant Superintendents and the Sub-Inspector fired without effect, and the mob proceeded to further violence... Assistant Superintendent McLoughlin and Sub-Inspector Bannerjee... were cut off and brutally hacked, receiving ghastly wounds from head to foot. At this point the crowd, apparently satisfied with the damage done, dispersed and Assistant Superintendent Stewart recovered

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<sup>150</sup> Sec., SDU to CS, 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1950, PRO/CO/691/209/42450.

<sup>151</sup> The following account is drawn from an anonymous internal report in PRO/CO691/209/42540.

<sup>152</sup> *TS*, 4<sup>th</sup> February 1950. The paper actually gives a non-existent street –Nnumgumi– along with Pemba Street; this must be Mkunguni Street, which was the street north of Pemba Street, and, perhaps significantly, also the haunt of a number of *wahuni* muggers.

the wounded officers and brought them back to barracks. ...it is not possible to say precisely how many rounds were fired.

The reinforcements, which arrived too late to assist, collected one dead rioter. Subsequently six other rioters were admitted to hospital with bullet wounds and one subsequently died. In addition to Assistant Superintendent McLoughlin and Sub-Inspector Bannerjee, Assistant Superintendent Stewart was admitted to hospital having sustained further injuries in the second clash. Eighteen constables were injured, five of them receiving serious injuries requiring admission to hospital.<sup>153</sup>

The position was deemed serious enough for detachments of the King's African Rifles to be placed on standby at the central police station in case of further disorder. Meanwhile, a platoon from a British navy boat, the HMS Loch Quoich, then moored in Dar es Salaam harbour, had briefly come ashore –'armed with rifles and fixed bayonets'– to guard the docks in case the strikers were to break through.<sup>154</sup> After the rioting at Mnazi Mmoja had been suppressed, however, no more violence occurred and the strike was soon broken. The day following the disturbances the Captain of HMS Loch Quoich wired London:

Mob appears still to be in existence but has withdrawn from town. Riots yesterday, Friday arose suddenly and unexpectedly and police were unarmed. Today, Saturday they are armed in force and even if further riots take place my platoon is unlikely to be required.<sup>155</sup>

In his despatch the next day London was informed that the mob had finally been dispersed 'in face of a large show of force.' By this time the strike had collapsed and the port was working normally. 145 men were charged with offences connected with the strike and the ensuing violence, including eight 'alleged union leaders' prosecuted for conspiracy.<sup>156</sup> In May, Abdelrehman Musa –not one of the leaders– was found guilty of the attempted murder of Asst. Supt. McLoughlin and sentenced to ten years. The events of 3<sup>rd</sup> February led to the dissolution of the dockers' union by a High Court order later in the year. Meanwhile, advantage was taken by the Port Authorities and the Labour Department to introduce the new registration scheme.<sup>157</sup> 'Registration', the Governor's Deputy informed Whitehall, 'is favoured by both Government and the employers with a view to stabilising the dock labour force and building up a more efficient industry.'<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>153</sup> Internal report in PRO/CO691/209/42540.

<sup>154</sup> TS, 4<sup>th</sup> February 1950; & Despatches from HMS Loch Quoich, PRO/CO691/209/42540.

<sup>155</sup> Despatches from HMS Loch Quoich.

<sup>156</sup> Iliffe, "Dockworkers", p.137/8; TS, 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1950.

<sup>157</sup> TS, 20<sup>th</sup> February 1950.

<sup>158</sup> Dep.Gov. to CO, 11<sup>th</sup> February 1950, PRO/CO/691/209/42450.

The riot had a deep impact on all sections of Dar es Salaam's population, official and non-official, African, Indian and European alike. The police stepped up efforts to recruit special constables, and, starting the month after the riots, engaged in intensive campaigns aimed at the repatriation of undesirables from the town.<sup>159</sup> It also led to the introduction of tear gas to the police armoury.<sup>160</sup> Meanwhile, a meeting of officials convened by the Member for Law and Order in late February arrived at the conclusion 'that recent experience in Dar es Salaam particularly in regard to the disturbance at the beginning of the month showed that changes in the administration of African affairs in the Municipal area were essential.'<sup>161</sup> The strike-related violence had a more general impact also, leading to heightened awareness amongst all communities of crime and policing in the town. After the riot, the correspondence pages in Dar es Salaam's newspapers became filled with missives from anxious (and angry) correspondents complaining of a breakdown of discipline and/or the lack of security.<sup>162</sup> Memories of the violence lingered. In conducting their preliminary survey of the town the following year, the Sofers observed that '[a]mong problems relating to the maintenance of law and order in Dar es Salaam, the topic most frequently mentioned to us has been the riots of February 1950.' 'It is commonly said', they continued, 'that the riot took the community completely by surprise.'<sup>163</sup>

As we have seen riot was by no means an uncommon event in Dar es Salaam during the British colonial period. These outbreaks of disorder were many and varied. They could take the form of anything from a minor skirmish with the police to serious communal violence or organised and widespread strike-related intimidation. The causes of the violence were equally diverse, each disturbance resulting from a combination of factors which might include racial tensions, economic grievances, political disillusionment, or even straightforward criminal intent.<sup>164</sup> In all the disturbances to occur, however, there was one constant. In every case those elements of the urban population categorised by officials as undesirable were directly involved, if not always as the instigators. The spivs and loiterers, semi-employed, unemployed and *wahuni* not only

<sup>159</sup> TS, 14<sup>th</sup> March 1950; see also CP to CS, 13<sup>th</sup> April 1950, TNA/30134.

<sup>160</sup> See post-strike correspondence in PRO/CO/691/209/42450.

<sup>161</sup> Meeting mins., 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1950, TNA/50070.

<sup>162</sup> See clippings in TNA/20219/Vol.II.

<sup>163</sup> Sofers' Report, p.63, TNA/18950/Vol. III.

formed a potential (or actual) criminal class, but they also were responsible for the most dramatic breakdowns of urban order in the period under consideration. As such the control of this section of the population became a primary goal of the colonial administration. It is to this which we turn in the concluding section.

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<sup>164</sup> Incidents in Uhindini were often initiated by thieves in order to provide cover for their activities.

### **Part Three**

#### **Removing the undesirable: Influx control in Dar es Salaam, 1919-1961**

Nearly everywhere natives are on the move.

P.M. Henry, The African Townee, *New Commonwealth*, 4.3.54, p.221.

It was the old case of 'Bright lights and empty pockets' or 'How're you gonna keep 'em down on the farm'.

E.G. Rowe (PC, Eastern, 1954) RH Mss.Afr.s.1698, p.38.

## Chapter Seven

### Undesirables and colonial urban order, 1919-1941

Although in the first two decades of British rule action against Dar es Salaam's marginal population was relatively modest<sup>1</sup> concern over the movement of Africans into the town was nevertheless a prime anxiety of colonial officials, and one which received a frequent airing. Indeed one of the administration's first actions after the consolidation of their hold on the town at the close of WWI was a forceful assertion of spatial organisation. In the first annual report for Dar es Salaam, for 1919-20, the unwelcome presence in the town of a residue of demobilised *askaris* and military porters is noted:

Although great care was taken during the dispersal of military native organisations that none, except those with right, should remain in this District, yet many hundreds managed in various ways to avoid return to their districts of origin, while others whose right place was cultivating outside remained in the town to spend their military pay.<sup>2</sup>

The official response to this situation was instructive of how colonial officials envisaged the future of their newly conquered capital and its relationship with the remainder of the territory. During the last half of 1919 'not less than about four thousand with no right or no employment were forced out of town either to their own districts or to the country to cultivate.'<sup>3</sup> So, at the very inception of British municipal administration, certain criteria for urban residence were alluded to. Those with 'right' to remain in Dar es Salaam and those in employment were unaffected. Conversely those without 'right' (ie. those without work who originated from outside the capitol) were removed to their home districts, or to the rural parts of Dar es Salaam district itself. The total of four thousand repatriatees represents the largest amount in any one year for which records remain. With the presence of such large numbers of 'alien' natives, and serious concern over the high

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<sup>1</sup> This was more probably a result of the limited resources available to urban officials than any disinclination on their part to tackle the surplus African population.

<sup>2</sup> DAR for 1919-20, TNA/1733:1.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 'The local town population', the report continued, 'has been further depleted by the departure of



levels of crime in the town towards the end of and following WWI, the newly established British administration were determined to demonstrate their effective control over the urban arena.

Having removed the town's 'surplus' population, the first (British) legislation aimed at controlling Dar es Salaam's African inhabitants was published in the form of the first Township Regulations in 1920.<sup>4</sup> Alongside bye-laws prohibiting hawking of goods, and public entertainments, ngomas or ceremonies of mourning without permission, were others aimed at controlling African movement within and to the town. Sections seven and eight of the regulations were directed at urban immigrants. Section seven required incoming residents to register at the district office within one month of arrival (when presumably an individuals' employment status could be looked into). Eight stipulated that Africans were not allowed to stay longer than six days in the town without written permission from the DC. It appears that these sections were not strictly enforced, however - either through the inability or neglect of officials. Sections ten and eleven of the regulations, as we have seen, restricted the presence of Africans in a 'prohibited area' between 6am and 6pm. Meanwhile, section twelve endowed district officials with powers to remove unwanted individuals from the town:

The Administrative Officer may repatriate to his home or District of origin, when such is within the confines of the Territory, any native whom he may consider an undesirable inhabitant or sojourner in the township, and any native, concerning whom an order for repatriation has been made, and who may be found thereafter within the township, shall be guilty of an offence.<sup>5</sup>

Neither the dramatic action taken against the former military employees in the second half of 1919, nor these regulations, appeared to exercise sufficient influence over the mobility of the 'native' population. Less than two years later the District Commissioner, F.W. Brett, was complaining that

Although thousands of military employees were repatriated or turned out of town after their demobilisation, there were apparently not satisfactory means to prevent a large number, representative of many tribes, returning to the town life to which they had become accustomed and which they prefer for various reasons, viz. the amenities of civilisation which are not as a rule to be had in the reserves, desire for independence as an individual

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natives, compelled to return to an agricultural life through non-employment.'

<sup>4</sup> GN no.6 of 1920.

<sup>5</sup> Township Rules, GN no.6 of 1920. The 'prohibited area' formed what would become -from 1923- zones one and two where the majority of Europeans and Asians lived.

free from family or tribal ties, some difference of opinion with relatives or chief, or evasion of justice. A number of these people are unable to obtain *suitable* employment [my emphasis] and others have no desire to work; these are potential thieves if they have no one who is willing to support them, since food is not available in Dar es Salaam as it may be at their homes....<sup>6</sup>

According to the 1921 annual report, the problem faced by the administration in ridding the town of undesirables was first and foremost a financial one. No vagrancy act was in force in the Territory, and whilst section 12 of the Township Regulations provided for orders of repatriation to be served against individual Africans, the cost was debited from the District Travelling votes. This, according to Brett, was beyond the means of the native administration, rendering 'such a course [ie. repatriation] impracticable in Dar es Salaam, except in a case of extreme emergency.'<sup>7</sup>

In response to such criticisms, the government revised and introduced further legislation aimed at preventing the growth of a class of un- or under-employed Africans emerging in the urban centres. The Destitute Persons Ordinance was the first piece of legislation of this type, enacted in early 1923. The explanatory memorandum that accompanied the bill highlighted the link between rural-urban migration and crime. 'It is common', the memorandum observed, 'for natives from the interior to come to the coast attracted by stories of high wages. Such natives often become destitute and are then tempted to become criminals.'<sup>8</sup> Punishment under the terms of the ordinance, however, was not restricted to those who had committed crimes. To be destitute was an offence in itself: a 'destitute person' was defined by the ordinance as 'any person without employment and unable to show he has visible and sufficient means of subsistence.' Where it was 'shown to the satisfaction of a magistrate that a person is a 'destitute person'' the magistrate could, under the ordinance, order that person to:

- (a) find work and report back before a named date
- (b) be detained for a period not exceeding one month with view to work being found for him
- (c) if the native is not dwelling in his usual place of residence to be returned to that place.

In addition, the bill continued,

if the native fails to comply with the order [to return 'home'], or having complied with the order leaves such place without the licence of an administrative officer or of his headman

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<sup>6</sup> DAR for 1921, p.8, TNA/53.4.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p.9.

<sup>8</sup> Destitute Persons Ordinance, Explanatory Memorandum, PRO/CO/691/57.

acting with the general or special directions of an administrative officer, he shall on conviction be liable to a fine not exceeding ten pounds or to imprisonment ...for a term not exceeding six months, and may again be ordered to return to his [home]...<sup>9</sup>

The ordinance also empowered police officers to arrest without warrant any person who was 'apparently a destitute person'. In the same year, sections 8 and 12 of the old Township Regulations -aimed at the control of immigrants to the towns and removing undesirables from them- were enshrined in a new version of the regulations as Section 146 (1) and (2).

The introduction of this new legislation failed to quell official concern over unrestrained African mobility in the Territory. This was in part a product of its neglect. In 1924 the Commissioner of Police complained of the lack of application of either the ordinance or section 146 of the Township Regulations observing that :

Administrative Officers might make far more extensive use of this latter regulation for ridding the larger townships of the horde of unemployed natives from the outside districts, who eke out a precarious existence by living on other people and who are responsible for the majority of petty thefts which occur in the Asiatic or native quarters.<sup>10</sup>

The reason for this inactivity does not appear to have been a disinclination to tackle those deemed undesirable, rather it was the machinery in place to effect their repatriation which, according to the Minutes of the SAOs conference of 1925, was 'cumbersome and required simplification.'<sup>11</sup> These shortcomings were also noted by Orde Browne in his 1926 report on labour in Tanganyika:

There can unfortunately be no doubt that the present lack of control or supervision of the travelling native is leading to a serious increase in the number of vagabonds in and around all the urban centres; the existing laws admit of such people being detained by the police and taken before a magistrate, who investigates their means of livelihood and either orders them to find work, or repatriates them to their home district. This procedure, however, is somewhat cumbrous, and it necessitates the production of proof that the man is a vagabond, and then, that he is the native of some other district. The latter is frequently difficult to do under existing conditions, and in any case, the police naturally only take action when something occurs to bring the case of a particular native to their notice; in other words, when he is somehow associated with crime.<sup>12</sup>

Despite these limitations Orde-Browne nevertheless recommended that more use should be made of the legislation in order to tackle 'undesirables'. 'This drifting mass of

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<sup>9</sup> No. 1 of 1923, Laws of Tanganyika, 1923.

<sup>10</sup> Police AR for 1924, p.58.

<sup>11</sup> Despatches 1925, PRO/CO/691/78.

<sup>12</sup> Orde-Browne, 'Labour', para.113.

doubtfully employable, and potentially criminal, natives', he observed in his labour report for 1927,

is in much need of closer control; whatever reluctance may be felt at interference with the native in his village, there can be little objection to measures of supervision over those people who leave their own surroundings in order to live under non-native conditions.<sup>13</sup>

The answer was more systematic use of the existing legislation:

I have discussed this matter with the Commissioner of Police and Prisons, who would welcome any suitable measures for purging the townships of this objectionable element. He has informed me that he will issue instructions to his Officers to take action under the [Destitute Persons] Ordinance in all suitable cases. As so little use has, up to the present, been made of this Ordinance, it would be advisable to issue a circular to District Officers advising them that it is the intention of the Government to endeavour to free the townships of these parasites by the strict application of the Ordinance, and that this can only be effected by close co-operation with the Police.<sup>14</sup>

'If the police can get a conviction and arrange with the AO concerned for the repatriation of the offender', a secretariat official concurred, 'we shall shake the vagrants up.'<sup>15</sup>

Whilst the decision was made to apply existing legislation with greater rigour, to many officials it was clear it was not, as it stood, adequate to deal with the situation in the towns. 'There are very few magistrates', G.F. Sayers, a secretariat official, observed of the Destitute Persons Ordinance, 'who would convict a native under the Order as it stands, for the reason that no native, unless he is a complete stranger, is 'unable to show that he has visible means of subsistence'. If he wishes to stay in town he 'borrows' from those of his tribe.'<sup>16</sup> A further problem with the legislation of the 1920s, was financial responsibility for the repatriation of unwanted Africans. Whilst officials were agreed on both the potential damage which exposure to the conditions of life in urban areas may have had on the 'unsophisticated' African, and about the need to forestall this process through the removal of Africans who had no place in the town, there was widespread reluctance to assume financial responsibility for repatriation. Sayers used the example of a former Mkamba employee of his to illustrate the problem:

I had working for me for a short time a Mkamba from the Kenya highlands. I discharged him for drunkenness but at the same time wrote to his DC in Kenya (getting no reply) and

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<sup>13</sup> Labour Dept report for 1927, p.8.

<sup>14</sup> Extract from Labour Commissioner's letter of 13<sup>th</sup> January 1927, TNA/3775/Vol.II.

<sup>15</sup> Sec Min, 28<sup>th</sup> February 1927, TNA/3775/Vol.II.

<sup>16</sup> Sec Min by G.F.S., 10<sup>th</sup> February 1927, TNA 3775 Vol.II.

asked the Police to assist in his repatriation. They said they had no funds. The boy's fare to his home is about 50/- which, in view of his short service and of the fact that he had been here since the war in the employment of many others before me, I saw no obligation to pay, though I expressed my willingness both to Kenya and to the Police to 'go halves' if they would do their bit. The boy was then willing to go but (I have seen him since) is now so thoroughly detribalised that he has no intention of returning to his home. I have \_\_\_\_ [illegible] him to employment from which he is discharged, but he is not a destitute person as he can always raise sufficient friends from his own tribesmen here to escape Police action if they decided to prosecute under the 1923 Order.<sup>17</sup>

In Sayers opinion, what was required 'in order to rid the town of workless natives is some enactment (?a repatriation of Natives Order) which will empower the police to apply for the repatriation of a native who has no work and has been so many weeks without it, and has no house, \_\_\_\_ [illegible], shamba, or other interest in the town.'<sup>18</sup>

However, whilst sections of the new penal code, which was introduced in Tanganyika three years later, further criminalised those without formal employment, the legislation aimed at removing 'undesirables' was left unchanged. Sections 166 and 167 of the new code singled out 'idle and disorderly persons' and 'rogues and vagabonds'. The former included 'common prostitutes'; those gambling in a public place; beggars; those likely to cause a breach of the peace; and anyone committing indecent acts in public; who, on conviction, were liable to one month's imprisonment or a fine not exceeding Shs40/- or both. Rogues and vagabonds, meanwhile, were defined as:

- i) persons convicted as an idle and disorderly person for a second time;
- ii) persons begging under false pretences;
- iii) every suspected person or reputed thief who has no visible means of subsistence and cannot give a good account of himself;
- iv) any person found wandering in or upon or near any premises or in any road or highway or any place adjacent thereto or in any public place at such time and under such circumstances as to lead to the conclusion that such person is there for an illegal or disorderly purpose.

Upon conviction an offender was liable for a first offence to three months imprisonment, and to one year for every subsequent offence. Whilst this new legislation perhaps made the conviction of 'undesirables' more straightforward, it in no way facilitated their removal, and throughout the colonial period prosecution of individuals under these sections of the penal code was rare.

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid..

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

Those officials responsible for the administration of Dar es Salaam and Tanganyika's other urban centres then, entered the second decade of British rule with the machinery to tackle the perceived menace of rural-urban migration and a surplus urban African population substantially unchanged; limited mainly to use of the Destitute Persons Ordinance and regulation 136(2) of the Township Rules.<sup>19</sup> With the onset of the depression in the early-1930s, the efficacy of this legislation was severely tested, as increasing use was made of it to deal with the growing problem of urban unemployment. The 1931 district report speaks of an 'exodus of natives from the Township... most noticeable in the past six months.' Many had 'voluntarily returned to their homes elsewhere owing to the inability to obtain employment locally.' On the other hand, the report continued, '[t]he number of repatriations of undesirables under Township Rule No. 136(2) has been considerably in excess of normal years.'<sup>20</sup> A July census in that year had discovered 1,876 Africans without work in the town, of whom 530 were 'alien natives who had never been employed at any time.'<sup>21</sup> The following month the Provincial Commissioner, F.W. Brett, stated his intention to 'clear the town of certain natives who are known to be unemployed and of undesirable character, but who may not come within the definition of a 'destitute person''<sup>22</sup> under the Destitute Persons Ordinance. These included all 530 of the aforementioned unoccupied 'alien natives'. As ever, there were financial problems associated with their removal. The treasurer recommended that Brett be authorised to incur the not inconsiderable expenditure of repatriating all these undesirables against the existing votes. It was anticipated that this may not be sufficient, however, and that he would have to apply for a further allocation of funds. Maintaining an orderly town was an expensive business. 'Repatriation', Brett informed the Chief Secretary the following year, 'is not as simple as it may seem.'<sup>23</sup> Indeed, as a secretariat official observed in a 1933 minute, whilst the 'DPO and Rule 136(2) of the Township Rules make adequate legal provision for the repatriation of destitute or undesirable natives... the question of financial provision is another matter.' 'Financial considerations', the minute continued, 'and the lack of other machinery, have often deterred DOs from having recourse to the enactments quoted above.'<sup>24</sup>

<sup>19</sup> In the new penal code section 146 of the 1923 Township Regulations became 136.

<sup>20</sup> DAR for 1931, p.20, TNA/53.4.

<sup>21</sup> Sec. Min., 22<sup>nd</sup> August 1931, TNA/21616/Vol.1.

<sup>22</sup> PC Brett to Treasurer, Dsm, 11<sup>th</sup> August 1931, TNA/21616/Vol.1.

<sup>23</sup> PC to CS, 14<sup>th</sup> May 1932, TNA/18950/Vol.1.

Although urban administrators -painfully conscious of the perceived threat to urban order posed by a growing jobless class- were keen to remove this section of the population, their arguments do not appear to have always prevailed amongst fiscally sensitive officials at the cash-strapped secretariat. When, in 1933, the request was made by the provincial office in Tanga, Tanganyika Territory's second largest town, for money to repatriate ninety three jobless Africans who were 'only too anxious to return to their district of origin, but are unable to do so owing to lack of funds'<sup>25</sup> it was turned down. To officials in Tanga it was

quite evident that unless the economic situation improves the number of potential repatriates will considerably increase, and we may be faced with a criminal force with which it will not only be extremely difficult, but practically impossible, to cope.<sup>26</sup>

However, after calculating the probable cost of repatriation of these ninety three unemployed Africans at Shs. 2,249/70 the potential threat to urban stability was not deemed serious enough by secretariat officials to deserve support. According to one secretariat minute '[a] very strong case would have to be made out before considerable sums of public money could be used to repatriate people who can readily maintain themselves if they will work.'<sup>27</sup> Such decisions were being made in spite of an unemployment rate in Tanga around this time being recorded at as much as 32 per cent of the adult male African population.<sup>28</sup> As the depression eased in the mid-thirties though, and job opportunities once again began to increase, the numbers of surplus urban Africans in Dar es Salaam and the other main urban centres, began to diminish to the manageable levels of the previous decade. The low rates of migration experienced by the territorial capital at this time, coupled with a recovering urban economy, relieved the pressure felt by urban officials that had arisen from the high unemployment levels prevalent at the height of the depression. This respite was brief, however. The experience of the depression was simply a foretaste of what was to come.

By the end of the decade a dramatic (and sustained) increase in the rate of rural-urban migration had led to the re-emergence of African unemployment on a greater scale than had occurred in the early 1930s. In 1939, Pike estimated that a quarter of the 6,000 able-

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<sup>24</sup> Sec. Min. by W.D.E.A., 14<sup>th</sup> June 1933, TNA/21616/Vol.1.

<sup>25</sup> PC Tanga to CS, 29<sup>th</sup> May 1933, TNA/21616/Vol.1.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Sec. Min. by W.D.E.A., 14<sup>th</sup> June 1933, TNA/21616/Vol.1.

<sup>28</sup> List of wage rates cited in Iliffe, *Modern History*, pp.352-3.

bodied men available for employment in the town were, at any one time, unemployed. Rural-urban migration simply exacerbated the problem:

A constant, uncontrolled influx of immigrant Africans from the hinterland makes the lot of these unemployed unenviable as most of them are suffering from malnutrition – they simply have not the means to buy food and many of them are not only unemployed but unemployable.<sup>29</sup>

In his report on unemployment two years later, Molohan confirmed the gravity of the situation. Although he felt that 'no accurate figure of the number of unemployed is ascertainable because of the unchecked ebb and flow of natives into and out of the town', he urged that 'Government must accept the fact, held not only by the writer but by other officers, that unemployment does exist to an alarming extent in Dar es Salaam.'<sup>30</sup> In the report, the ranks of the unemployed were broken down by Molohan into three sub-sets:

(a) able bodied natives out of employment, whose numbers may have decreased as a result of conscription and enlistment;

(b) able bodied natives who eke out a bare existence by accepting casual employment as water boys, porters etc; they have little inclination for regular employment. Their number would not be so great were it not for the fact that the Indian has always been ready to exploit this cheap supply of labour;

(c) natives who are already, or are becoming, unemployable because they simply have not the physique to undertake regularly employment, due to constant malnutrition.<sup>31</sup>

All three categories were regarded with suspicion by urban officials who continued to link unemployment with crime. In 1939, a marked increase of offences under the 'rogues and vagabonds' section of the penal code was remarked upon in the annual Police report.<sup>32</sup> Two years later Provincial Commissioner Baker observed that 'too often persons... [who] fail to make good eventually swell the number of criminals.'<sup>33</sup> In addition to fostering African criminality, the presence of such large numbers of un- and under-employed persons was also considered to be having a deflationary effect on the wages of those in employment, and hence contributing further to the poor living standards experienced by the majority of the African population. Officials in Dar es Salaam were only too aware that similar conditions in Tanga had contributed to a serious outbreak of disorder in 1939. This had been precipitated by a dockworkers strike on the 8<sup>th</sup> August and by the -government authorised- use of 'redeemed tax-labourers'

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<sup>29</sup> Pike, 'Native Affairs', p. 9.

<sup>30</sup> Molohan, 'Unemployment', pp.1-2.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Police AR for 1939, p.8.

<sup>33</sup> PC Baker to CS, 12<sup>th</sup> March 1941, TNA/61/688/5.



(defaulters, in other words) as 'black-leg labour' by the port employers. According to the Provincial Commissioner's annual report, the following day

several gangs, whose ranks were swelled by numbers of men who were prepared to admit that they were doing it only from a spirit of enjoyment or an unthinking display of bravado, ran through the town shouting and singing and on the 10th a large mob gathered and the police were obliged to resort to force in order to disperse them. This brought an end to the actual disorder...

'Professional or genuine' unemployment, the Commissioner complained, was 'large in the town, and... likely to increase as the war goes on.' Steps had 'therefore been taken to help workless men to leave and by the end of the year 55 men had been repatriated to their homes in other parts of the Territory.'<sup>34</sup> According to a report on the strike submitted the following year, 'to the upcountry native Tanga is regarded as a Klondyke where money is easy to come by and food plentiful'. The authors of the report recommended that, whilst 'it was unfortunately, inevitable that a certain number of casual labourers should exist in every town... no effort should be spared to keep their number as low as possible.'<sup>35</sup> Baker, Commissioner for Eastern Province, concurred. 'It is vital', he wrote to the Chief Secretary a year after the Tanga report had been submitted,

that unemployment and ill-doing must be checked so far as is possible in urban areas and, with this end in view, it is imperative that those who can find no work or are habitual criminals must be repatriated for their own good as well as that of the community.<sup>36</sup>

Urban administrators, however, still felt that fiscal constraints, along with insufficient manpower, undermined official capacity for action against unregulated African movement into (and within) the town. Township Rule 136(1) remained pretty much the dead letter it had been when discussed by senior administrators at their 1929 conference. A decade on, Provincial Commissioner Longland considered it to be 'an impossible rule to carry out, at least in Dar es Salaam, because natives come and go without anybody being any the wiser.'<sup>37</sup> The following year, his successor, Baker, declared he would be happy to enforce the rule but he had too few staff to do so.<sup>38</sup> The Provincial Commissioner of Tanga, facing the same problems as his opposite number in Dar es

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<sup>34</sup> Tanga PAR for 1939, p.94.

<sup>35</sup> Report of the Commission appointed to enquire into the disturbances which occurred in the port of Tanga during the month of August, 1939, para.13, PRO/CO/691/179/42191/13.

<sup>36</sup> PC Baker to CS, 12<sup>th</sup> March 1941, TNA/61/688/5.

<sup>37</sup> PC Longland to Ag.DO, 17<sup>th</sup> January 1939, TNA/61/443.

<sup>38</sup> PC Baker to CS, 21<sup>st</sup> May 1940, TNA/28685.

Salaam, was of the same opinion.<sup>39</sup> Similarly DO Pike, in 1940, also complained –this time with rule 136(2) in mind- that although ‘[l]egislation existed to enforce the repatriation of natives who were not in employment... the agents for its enforcement were lacking.’<sup>40</sup>

In an attempt to check the unsupervised movement of Africans into and out of the town (as well as to enhance control over the township population) a short-lived system of identification was introduced in 1938. Each ward was given a letter and the streets within it a number. Africans registered in a house on a particular street would then receive a number which would identify them. For example P/6/134 would be an individual living in Gerezani, Keko or Kurasini (P), in a particular street or area (6), and a resident of a particular house or hut (134).<sup>41</sup> During the remainder of 1938 a concerted attempt was made to record in Native Tax Registers the town’s African inhabitants using the new system. The official responsible for conducting the registration, however, complained after completion about the persistent shortcomings of the town headmen. In response, the Provincial Commissioner shortly afterwards augmented the town’s native administration. At a meeting in January 1939 Longland informed the six headmen of Dar es Salaam that each *mtaa* (ward) should be organised along the following lines:-

Every street should have a headman, *mnyapara*<sup>42</sup> or policeman, it did not matter what you called him as long as he was a man of character. As his duties were entirely honorary he would not be expected to do more than keep an eye on all activities in his street:- He would report the arrival of strangers to the *Mkubwa* of his *Mtaa*... In short he would be the ‘eye’ of the *Mkubwa* of a street in the *Mtaa*.<sup>43</sup>

Effective methods of facilitating the social control of the urban population, however, remained stubbornly hard to implement. Neither the system of registration by location nor the introduction of *wanyapara* as the ‘eyes’ of the native administration appeared to outlive their proponents term of office in Dar es Salaam as they soon fell into abeyance,<sup>44</sup> and a truly effective means of monitoring the shifting urban populace remained a pipe dream of officials throughout the colonial period.

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<sup>39</sup> PC Tanga to CS, 27<sup>th</sup> May 1940, TNA/28685.

<sup>40</sup> Record of first meeting of Native Welfare Cttee., 19<sup>th</sup> September 1940, TNA/61/708.

<sup>41</sup> See DO, Dsm to PC, EP, 20.6.38, in TNA 61/207 Vol. 1, for areas allocated to each headman.

<sup>42</sup> *Mnyapara* was the term used for overseers on plantations, which indicates how the urban African population was viewed primarily as a labour force. (I owe this insight to Jim Giblin).

<sup>43</sup> PC, EP to DO Pike, 31<sup>st</sup> January 1939, TNA/61/443.

When Baker took over as Provincial Commissioner in 1940 the old problems persisted. Movement into Dar es Salaam had accelerated with the onset of war and all the complications associated with rapid urbanisation, from high levels of unemployment to overcrowding, had been accentuated in the town. Meanwhile the machinery for dealing with the surplus population remained inadequate. In Baker's opinion though, it was not solely a matter of material or human resources. In the amendments to his 1931 report on Dar es Salaam, written in 1941, he argued that in order for such legislation to be effective it was necessary to establish its legitimacy amongst the town's resident African population first. Township Rule 136(1), he stated:

would, if it could be enforced, be of value in controlling this [jobless] class of African. Such a rule, however, cannot be effective without the goodwill of the resident population: unless it has its wholehearted support only a few of the less cunning of the immigrants will be arrested by police constable [sic] and its enforcement may become a source of irritation to the respectable members of society owing to their being continually asked to produce their permits. Unless, by means of *barazas* [meetings] at which the necessity for the enforcement of the rule is explained to all and sundry, the town headmen, house-owners, regular lodgers, and associations can be induced to give their assistance to the enforcement of the rule, it is better not to attempt to apply it. Repatriation of undesirables under section 2 of the same rule will, if undertaken with energy, assist to keep down the number of vagrants but it is desirable that steps should be taken to prevent vagrancy.<sup>45</sup>

### The McRoberts ruling

There is some irony in the timing of this call to seek the assent of Dar es Salaam's African residents. Under two months later Township Rule 136(2), the legislation most frequently used to remove unwanted Africans from the town, was declared *ultra vires* (beyond legal authority) by a Dar es Salaam magistrate, in part because of a lack of consent for it amongst the general population. In a case of repatriation against one Ramazani bin Mbendo -a 'rogue and vagabond' with six previous convictions for offences against property, who had originally been expelled from the town in 1932- Mr. Justice McRoberts, whilst acknowledging that the prisoner was 'the kind of person who is best kept out of town', ruled that the regulation invoked for his removal offended 'against every canon of legality which has ever been established whereby such rules are to be judged.' The Township Rules, he complained, 'are not made 'by the people and for the

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<sup>44</sup> There is no surviving record of either in subsequent years.

<sup>45</sup> Memo. by PC Baker, 10<sup>th</sup> January 1940, TNA/18950/Vol.II.

people', nor are they subjected to public criticism by a vigorous press or by public bodies before they become law.'

Rule 136(2) was deemed invalid on three counts. The first was for technical legal reasons. To be valid, the by law had to be within the authority of the ordinance which enabled it to be made. This, McRoberts concluded, 136(2) failed to do. More relevant to our discussion though, were the second and third counts: the arbitrariness of the offending regulation and its 'unreasonable' character. 'We might observe', McRoberts pronounced,

that the public, and every member of the public, is entitled to know under what law he lives, and though the law may be changed, yet it must at all times have at least such a degree of fixity as will allow the law-abiding public to know what it is...

In the matter before me any Native in the place can be thrown out of it [town] at the behest of the AO without any reason assigned, or without such a one as any reasonable man might consider to be any real reason at all. The test is, what the particular DO considers to be an 'undesirable inhabitant' and this may differ with every officer who exercises these functions. Just as equity was once said to vary with the length of the Chancellor's foot, so might 'undesirability' vary with the length of an AO's temper...

Can it be said that any Native coming to this town can be sure that the DC will not think him 'undesirable' and will have him ejected? Where then is the certainty, and what Native could with absolute safety, build a house, or sink capital in this place?

To validate the third count on which he ruled regulation 136(2) *ultra vires*, McRoberts quoted authority to show that by-laws were unreasonable 'if, for instance, they were found to be partial and unequal in their operation as between different classes; if they were manifestly unjust; if they disclosed bad faith; if they involved such gratuitous or oppressive interference with the rights of those subject to them as could find no justification in the minds of reasonable men....' Regulation 136(2), in his opinion, failed on all counts. In McRoberts' judgment:

That this by-law is partial and unequal in its operation between the different classes of the community cannot be gainsaid. It applies only to Natives, and both Europeans and Indians are exempted from its operation. It is unjust and oppressive, for it renders any African who is not a native of the place subject to expulsion without process of law, without appeal, and without lawful reason, for it must be remembered that in exercising this power the DO acts administratively and not as a Magistrate. It is a gratuitous interference with the rights of the subject who is entitled to travel where he will throughout the country, and to use the public roads for passage wherever they are established.

The right of transit is preserved by Article 7 of the Mandate<sup>46</sup> to all and sundry, but no Native must show his face in Acacia Ave if the fiat has gone forth against him for whatever reason, or for no reason at all. It precludes him from living here even though he may have established his home years before and have his relations, his property, his business, and everything which makes life worth living, here, and he may have no other place in which he may live. But all this is nothing. The DC does not like him. He must go.

It is no good telling me that no DC could be so unreasonable. Give a man despotic power, make him accountable to no one for his actions, excuse him from giving reasons for what he does, and it is perfectly astonishing what such a man may do.<sup>47</sup>

That McRoberts came to this judgement at this time was remarkable. With the inflow of immigrants adding substantially to Dar es Salaam's problems in the early 1940s, there was a firm consensus amongst colonial officials (and the European non-official population) -including both those who were more liberal in their outlook as well as the 'hard-liners'- that there was an urgent need for increasing the powers available to urban administrators for dealing with the surplus urban population. The concern expressed by McRoberts about the civil liberties of the African was incomprehensible to most officials, particular those with some responsibility for administering the urban areas. Rule 136(2) had, as far as they were concerned, been applied only against an unrespectable class of Africans whose removal from the town benefited the entire community. According to Dar es Salaam's District Commissioner:

The ruling by Mr. Justice McRoberts on Township Rule 136 has created a most undesirable situation, further he has created a right never recognised in any native law – that is the professional criminal is at liberty to live in any place he considers he can most profitably carry on his nefarious trade.<sup>48</sup>

The possibility, raised by McRoberts, that the wide powers conferred by the regulation could be abused by an over zealous official were dismissed.<sup>49</sup> The application of 136(2) in order to repatriate jobless Africans in 1931 (and no doubt on other occasions for which no records survive) was conveniently forgotten, as were the demands by contemporary officials to apply the same regulation against the growing number of unemployed in Dar es Salaam at that time. Indeed, the *ultra vires* ruling turned out to be an aberration. McRoberts appears to have been something of a maverick, and whilst his judgment found

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<sup>46</sup> The League of Nations Mandate which conferred upon Britain power to govern Tanganyika.

<sup>47</sup> McRoberts' ruling is reported in TS, 14<sup>th</sup> March 1941, p.10.

<sup>48</sup> Proposals for Agenda of PC's 1941 Conference by DC, Dsm, 28<sup>th</sup> March 1941, TNA/61/702/1.

<sup>49</sup> PC Baker, for example, could not 'but take exception to Mr. McRoberts criticism of members of the Provincial Administration who are I maintain, as a class, very sympathetic towards the African and careful of his just treatment whether as an individual or as a community.' PC Baker to CS, 12<sup>th</sup> March 1941, TNA/61/688/5.

some support from the settler press-the Judges' strictures, commented an editorial in the *Tanganyika Standard*, were ones 'with which any ordinary member of the public will fully agree'<sup>50</sup>-his counterparts in the native administration were aghast. Circumstances in the capital were far too pressing for officials to concern themselves with the moral force of the magistrate's argument. According to Baker it was

very necessary that the rule should be retained in its entirety and legalized if necessary. On its enforcement depends, to a large extent, the welfare and comfort of the native community of a large town such as Dar es Salaam...<sup>51</sup>

Within a month of the ruling the Chairman of the Township Authority was bemoaning the consequent return of natives who had been expelled under 136(2) and the resultant increase in crime in the township.<sup>52</sup> The *Tanganyika Standard* reported that steps were being taken to meet the new situation. Indeed, less than three weeks after 136(2) had been declared *ultra vires* it was replaced by Removal of Undesirable Natives regulations which were passed under the Emergency Powers (Defence) Act that endowed the colonial government with special powers for the duration of the war. These replacement regulations reinstated a DC's powers to 'repatriate to his home... any native he may consider an undesirable inhabitant or sojourner in the township' of Dar es Salaam.<sup>53</sup> They differed from rule 136(2) only in as much as they were not a by-law and hence not subject to the tests by which McRoberts found the original legislation wanting. The speed with which a repatriation mechanism was re-introduced indicates its importance to colonial officials. The ability to remove unwanted residents was clearly central to the colonial administration of the town.

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<sup>50</sup> TS, 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1941, p.6.

<sup>51</sup> PC Baker to CS, 12<sup>th</sup> March 1941, TNA/61/688/5.

<sup>52</sup> TS, 11<sup>th</sup> April 1941.

<sup>53</sup> GN No.113 of 1941. The regulations were extended to ten other Tanganyikan towns on 12<sup>th</sup> June, 1941.

## Chapter Eight

### Urban growth and influx control, 1939-1961

Whilst the first two decades of British rule had seen the comparatively modest growth of the African community in Dar es Salaam from around 20,000 to approximately 33,000, the final decades under the British saw a significant expansion of the capital's African population, which by the early 1960s was approaching 120,000 people. Over a little more than twenty years the town's African population grew almost four times over. Neither the town's infrastructure nor its' formal economy, meanwhile, developed at a rate which kept pace with this rapid expansion. The heightened rates of urban growth experienced by Dar es Salaam first became apparent shortly before WWII. In the early to mid-thirties the capital's African population had actually contracted slightly. By the end of the decade, however, migration from the rural areas into the towns was occurring on a previously unprecedented scale, and was set to increase still further with the onset of war.

The reasons underlying this phenomenon are somewhat mysterious. Unskilled wage rates in Dar es Salaam had actually fallen since the depression, at a time when the cost of living in the town was rising.<sup>1</sup> In 1938, the District Officer, estimating there were 'some 1,500 men in Dar es Salaam who are either not employed or employed for such periods that they only work one day in three', observed that '[t]he result of this excess supply of labour over demand ha[d] resulted in wages being forced down below the subsistence level.' There were cases of labourers being paid as little as Shs.8/- for thirty ten hour days, when in Dar es Salaam Shs.10/- was considered the barest minimum. 'It is obvious', the DO commented, 'that wages have now reached a sub-marginal limit.'<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, he went on to report that 'the drift to the town from the country districts continues so the problem tends to get worse'. Furthermore, it was observed that even the fact that 'wages on the estates outside Dar es Salaam are now higher and the cost of

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<sup>1</sup> See Iliffe, *Modern History*, p.353.

<sup>2</sup> Ag.DO to PC,EP, 31<sup>st</sup> October 1938, TNA/25912.

living lower than in the Township... does not seem to check the flow.’<sup>3</sup> As the effects of the war began to impact upon the colonial economy, inflation further exacerbated living conditions in the capital. A 1942 enquiry found that ‘87 per cent of Government employees in Dar es Salaam are in receipt of a wage on which they cannot possibly subsist without getting into debt and remaining in debt.’<sup>4</sup> Whilst wages were (just) sufficient for a bachelor, expenditure exceeded incomes by at least Shs.7/97 each month for a married man without children, and Shs.14/85 for a man with a family (only 317 out of the 2,901 surveyed were found not to be married, or living with a woman). ‘It is certain’, observed the author of the report,

that any supplementary sources of income which the employee may have are inconsiderable and generally insufficient to bridge the gap between income and expenditure. At the end of the month the employee has to pawn his clothes and the vicious circle of interest on pawnbroker’s tickets commences again.

Sixty per cent of government employees were found to be in debt to the extent of a month’s salary or more. Private sector employees were, on the whole, even worse off, earning on average less than half of those with government jobs – Shs.12/50-15/- per month compared to the Shs.29/50-33/50 earned by an unskilled government employee. ‘[B]ecause of a lack of proper food’, the report concluded, ‘a considerable portion of the population of Dar es Salaam are becoming unemployable.’ African discontent at the situation was expressed in the columns of *Kwetu*:

Our chief lamentation today is Pay, every corner, official and unofficial, skilled and unskilled, office and field, house and kitchen, grumble for better pay.<sup>5</sup>

The tendency of wage rates, however, was to continue to lag behind inflation. It was not until after the general strike of 1947 that this trend was reversed, when the 40-50 per cent wage rise received by the dockworkers produced increases of a third or more in other sectors.<sup>6</sup>

Housing conditions were also deteriorating in the 1940s. Thanks to the unprecedented influx of population, Governor Jackson informed the Colonial Office in 1943, that in the ‘badly congested’ African quarter ‘slum conditions have been accentuated’; the

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Report of enquiry into wages and cost of living of low grade African government employees in Dar es Salaam’ [Sept. 1942], p.7, TNA/30598.

<sup>5</sup> *Kwetu*, 6<sup>th</sup> December 1942, cited in Iliffe, “Dockworkers”, p.128.



approximate density having risen by 50 per cent since 1939 from 10 to 15 persons per house.<sup>7</sup> Four years later more than two-thirds of the houses in the African township contravened the overcrowding rules.<sup>8</sup> Indians moving into those areas of Zone III closest to Uhindini in the course of the 1940s had further exacerbated the shortage of African housing. By 1950, the Provincial Commissioner reported, 'areas which before the war were considered African are now almost entirely Asian.'<sup>9</sup> As a result, unauthorised African shanties had begun to appear on the outskirts of town.<sup>10</sup> Neither these nor the new government estates at Ilala, Temeke and Magomeni, however, did much to reduce a population density which by 1954 had reached an average of eight persons per 16ft. x 20ft. room.<sup>11</sup>

Despite the depreciation of the value of wages and deteriorating living conditions in Dar es Salaam -alongside widespread unemployment- Africans continued to enter the town undeterred. In a little over a decade the African population more than doubled from 23,500 in 1937 to 50,765 in 1950.<sup>12</sup> Such movement, in the circumstances, seems hard to account for. Why should people move from rural areas, where both food and accommodation were apparently more easily accessible, to the town where inflation was resulting in the increasing impoverishment of both wage-earners and the unwaged alike? The relative freedom of town life was probably part of the attraction, as was, no doubt, the glamour of the capital; its' modernity, variety and the fast pace of life there. It is unlikely, however, that these aspects played as large a role in immigration to the towns as contemporary officials ascribed to them. As Sabot observes:

there is no reason why rural residents should not see the difference in environments as a net psychic cost rather than a benefit. This will depend on preferences. For some rural residents the traditional family structure prevailing in the rural areas may be oppressive, while for others it may be a source of support which is left only with reluctance.<sup>13</sup>

Modern economists, in discussing the great post-war drift to African cities, have

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<sup>6</sup> Iliffe, *Modern History*, p.404.

<sup>7</sup> Governor's Despatch, 27<sup>th</sup> November 1943, PRO/CO/691/185/42423.

<sup>8</sup> Iliffe, *Modern History*, p.372.

<sup>9</sup> PAR for 1950, p.41.

<sup>10</sup> Development Organisation AR for 1950, p.17.

<sup>11</sup> *EARC Report*, p.211.

<sup>12</sup> These figures are from the DARs.

<sup>13</sup> R.H. Sabot, *Economic development and urban migration: Tanzania 1900-1971*, (London, 1978), p.16.

tended to stress the economic rationality of such internal migration.<sup>14</sup> Whilst unemployment may have been a common feature of urban life, the opportunities available in the towns nevertheless outweighed those available in the underdeveloped rural areas. Even if waged employment was not secured on arrival in the town, either the risk of benefiting in the long term from formal sector employment made the move worthwhile or informal sector activities provided a subsistence at least equivalent to that enjoyed by many in the rural areas. In the case of Dar es Salaam, its' rapid growth in the 1940s can be accounted for by a mixture of poor conditions in the rural areas along with the opportunities present in the urban environment to get by through informal economic activity, *as well as* the possibility of obtaining waged employment, albeit at reduced wage-rates. Such a conclusion concurs with that reached by Westcott in his work on the impact of WWII on Tanganyika. During the 1940s, writes Westcott,

it was probable that conditions of life in rural areas were getting worse. Those not recruited or conscripted were constantly pressurised by chiefs and officials to increase crop production. Towns were therefore an escape from rural oppression for both men and women. They provided greater freedom and wider opportunities. Food was scarce, expensive or indigestible, but nobody starved in the towns. There is evidence that the prospect of rations in Dar es Salaam attracted many from the hinterland during 1943-44. In the ports, increased war-time exports, military construction works and visiting troop ships all provided employment and money.<sup>15</sup>

Whilst the move to the town might have made sense to the incoming African, however, to colonial officials the extent of rural-urban migration was both incomprehensible and, worse still, deeply inconvenient. Accelerated immigration put the town's administrators under growing pressure by placing increasing strain on an already inadequate urban infrastructure; by adding to a growing class of the unemployed, and –as a consequence- by forcing down wages; and by adding to concerns about public order. To officials who already envisaged an African's natural place as being in the countryside, growing rural-urban movement at a time when urban living conditions were so poor simply provided further evidence of 'native' irrationality.

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<sup>14</sup> See *ibid.*; or for the Kenyan case J. Harris and M. Todaro, "Urban unemployment in East Africa", IDS, University of Nairobi, Discussion Paper No. 71, September 1968.

<sup>15</sup> Westcott, 'Impact', p.285. Evidence of the increased mobility of the African population of Tanganyika at this time is dramatically illustrated by the huge increase in railway passengers that occurred during and after the war, the numbers rising from 470,000 in 1939 to nearly two million ten years later. At the same time bus services were also becoming increasingly common. *Ibid.*, p.285.

## Influx control initiatives

Despite the immediate re-introduction of repatriation legislation after the McRoberts ruling, colonial administrators were nevertheless soon complaining once more about the continuing inadequacy of the legal machinery to deal with the surplus urban population. What officials desired above all were some measures to control the rural-urban movement of Africans. Action under the existing legislation, however rigorous, was in itself inadequate, addressing the symptom rather than the cause. What was required, many argued, was a more comprehensive solution addressing African mobility in Tanganyika as a whole.

The introduction of some form of territory-wide identification aimed at restricting unauthorised movement of Africans had been raised on a number of occasions between the wars. Each time the political will proved insufficiently strong for action to be taken on the proposals. Orde-Browne first raised the issue in his report on labour in 1926. He recommended the introduction of a pass system –based on the retention of tax tickets by ‘travelling natives’- aimed at ‘increasing control of the travelling native’ along with ‘more drastic measures for dealing with vagrancy.’<sup>16</sup> Whilst no organised pass system was introduced, the *cheti ya kodi* (tax receipt), which Africans were obliged to carry, became the principal means used by officials to identify Africans throughout the colonial period. The issue re-emerged during the Senior Administrators’ Conference of October 1929, at which a ‘Report on the Identification of Travelling Natives’ formed the basis for discussion. Those officials present who had some experience of township conditions felt the proposals in the report –the introduction of identity cards for Africans outside their home areas- did not go far enough, advocating instead a full pass system. Capt. F.C. Hallier, former DC, Dar es Salaam, and acting Commissioner for Eastern Province, suggested ‘a committee be appointed to examine the South African Urban Areas Act, which he thought contain[ed] much that is useful and suitable for application in this country’ – including ‘the control and protection of natives in proclaimed areas.’<sup>17</sup> The majority of officials present, however, were rather more cautious. Whilst it was acknowledged that ‘the lack of a proper means of identification is having a rapidly

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., paras. 118 and 119.

<sup>17</sup> Mins. of the Senior AOs Conference, Dar es Salaam, October 1929, p.100, in E. Africana, UDsm Library.

demoralising effect on people who are quite honest by nature', and that 'it was definitely to the advantage of a native that he should provide himself with an identity card when he left the Province in which his home was situated' (along with *all* up-country Africans entering a town), the Conference 'emphasized that pass laws were not in question.'<sup>18</sup> Moreover, it was considered that on the introduction of the system, possession of an identity card should -at least initially- perhaps be optional. Some residue of concern for African 'liberty of action' evidently remained. Enough, it appears, to have -once again- prevented any action being taken on the recommendations of the conference. Whilst the need for some form of identification system was continually voiced by officials throughout the colonial period, other concerns -no doubt connected with the Territory's Trusteeship status- hindered the endorsement of such proposals by senior administrators both in the Tanganyika secretariat and at the Colonial Office. Further evidence of this reticence, and also perhaps of the tension between different levels of the administration, is to be found in the fact that six years later an Identification Ordinance -which required people leaving their province of origin to be in possession of an official letter of identification- although being passed into law as No. 13 of 1935, was never actually brought into force.<sup>19</sup>

In 1940, as the problems of rapid urbanisation became ever more apparent, the subject was back on the Provincial Commissioners' conference agenda. The participants blanched at the introduction of anything as severe as a pass system. It was decided that 'no case could be made for the compulsory identification of Africans generally or African labourers.' On the other hand, it was proposed

that an experiment might well be made in the issue of identity cards by Native Authorities to any native who wished to leave his own district for any purpose whatsoever and desired to provide himself with a form of travel document. This ID document would serve the same purpose in the case of the African as the passport does in the case of the European.<sup>20</sup>

Native Authorities did begin to issue *ruhusa ya njia* (travel permits) in the early 1940s. However, it was soon apparent that such limited action was not enough to satisfy officials responsible for the administration of Dar es Salaam. The following year, in response to

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p.109.

<sup>19</sup> The reasons for this are unclear; any correspondence relating to the ordinance appear to have been destroyed or lost. The fact that the ordinance was not enforced is mentioned in the PCs' 1940 Conference Report (para.6 - PRO/CO/691/184/42397).

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

police complaints about 'destitute natives... found sleeping on open verandahs, and in public markets etc.' (and their inability to deal with this phenomenon), the Native Affairs Sub-Committee of the Township Authority observed the necessity to 'endeavour to limit the immigration into the Township of the class of person without any fixed abode who are likely to become a public nuisance.'<sup>21</sup> Provincial Commissioner Baker considered that control of immigration from country to town was essential and could 'best be achieved by the resurrection in legal form of the old Township Rule no.136(1) prohibiting an immigrant from remaining in the township for more than six days without a permit from an Administrative Officer.'<sup>22</sup> Meanwhile, Molohan, in his report on unemployment also bemoaned the shortcomings of the current legislation:

The only control the authorities have over this mass of unemployed is that supposed to be granted by the Defence (Repatriation of Undesirable Natives) Regulations, 1941 which replaced Rule 136 of the Township Rules. It may for all intents and purposes be regarded as a dead letter since (a) it only operates after a native is within a township (b) the Police have no initial power to arrest or order any native to appear before a Magistrate, and (c) it is extremely doubtful whether any magistrate would consider an unemployed native an "undesirable inhabitant or sojourner".<sup>23</sup>

What was required, according to Molohan, were 'comprehensive regulations (i) to control the entry of natives into the town, and (ii) to repatriate the existing surplus unemployed back to their home districts'. As an appendix to his report Molohan attached draft legislation -The Townships (Restriction of Entry of Natives) Rules- which he proposed would rectify the position. This envisaged a strictly enforced pass system in which Africans leaving the rural areas would be required to obtain a road pass to enable them to proceed to a township. On arrival in the township they would then be obliged ('at the earliest opportunity') to report to the local administrative authority from whom they obtained a permit to remain in the town. Powers of arrest were granted to '[a]ny administrative officer, labour officer, police officer, Liwali or recognised native headmen of a township on receiving instructions from an AO' over anyone suspected of committing an offence against these regulations, and upon conviction an offender would be liable to a fine not exceeding Shs.300/- or three months imprisonment.

Whilst it is clear that many officials sympathised with Molohan's proposals, senior

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<sup>21</sup> Ag.MS to CS, 27<sup>th</sup> August 1941, TNA/30134.

<sup>22</sup> PC Baker to CS, 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1941, TNA/30134. McRoberts' ruling on 136(2) was held to have invalidated the whole of section 136 of the Township Regulations.

<sup>23</sup> Molohan, 'Unemployment', p.2.

officials at the secretariat and the Colonial Office remained reluctant to endorse the introduction of a pass system in what was a mandated territory. Those administrators with first hand experience of the situation in Dar es Salaam, on the other hand, were unanimous in the opinion that there was a pressing need to enhance the current legislation. According to Baker, in 1941, 'drastic measures are urgently necessary in order to reduce the numbers of unemployed and underfed natives, both adult and juvenile, who infest the township.'<sup>24</sup> That year's provincial annual report commented that such measures were under consideration.<sup>25</sup> No action appears to have been taken, however, and the following year the District Officer in Dar es Salaam was once more complaining to his counterparts in neighbouring districts that '[n]umbers of *Wahuni* and unemployed continue to drift into the town'.<sup>26</sup>

Whilst the drift of 'undesirables' into the township continued to cause much consternation during 1942, the potentially much greater problem of demobilised soldiers arriving in Dar es Salaam began to arouse equal concern amongst urban officials in the course of the year. In June, DC Pike drew Baker's attention to

A difficult situation that has started in Dar es Salaam and which shews every sign of developing into an acute administrative problem after the war, that is, the disinclination of discharged soldiers, whether disabled or otherwise, to leave the town and to return to the land. Their gratuities and pensions are spent in an incredibly short time and they then complain bitterly that the Government will not give them work, - by work, they mean employment as messengers and watchmen not manual labour.

...The numbers at present returning from Army Life are only a trickle but they are increasing and when the war ends there will be an absolute avalanche. Such a state of affairs will make administration of Dar es Salaam Township, already difficult, quite impossible.<sup>27</sup>

Baker told Pike he was 'endeavouring to organise machinery, of which Government will approve, for prohibiting Africans from residing in Dar es Salaam unless they are in possession of a permit to do so.'<sup>28</sup> By the end of the year such approval had still to be won. In his annual report Baker complained that existing sanctions could not 'adequately deal with the situation.'<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> PC Baker to CS, 29<sup>th</sup> September 1941, TNA/30134.

<sup>25</sup> PAR for 1941, p.10.

<sup>26</sup> Political, Uzaramo, Dsm, to Political, Kisarawe, Pugu, 12<sup>th</sup> June 1942.

<sup>27</sup> DC Pike to PC, 4<sup>th</sup> June 1942, TNA/540/27/13.

<sup>28</sup> Provicer, Dsm to Political, Uzaramo, Dsm, 9<sup>th</sup> June 1942, TNA/540/27/13.

<sup>29</sup> PAR for 1942, p.20.

Conditions in Dar es Salaam deteriorated yet further. In spite of taxes being reduced the previous year from Shs11/- to 9/- in districts surrounding the capital –as a disincentive to rural-urban movement<sup>30</sup>- the drift actually accelerated during 1943. Whilst migrant youth and the presence of discharged soldiers remained a problem, the situation was exacerbated by the introduction of rationing in the town in May, which, according to the District Officer, ‘acted like a magnet in attracting natives to the town who wished to be ensured a regular means of procuring foodstuffs.’<sup>31</sup> The situation was not helped by the fact that food was in short supply elsewhere when, as the 1943 provincial report observed, ‘Dar es Salaam is the standby for peasants whose crops have failed or who for various reasons are unable to earn the wherewithal to pay their tax in their home areas.’<sup>32</sup> In December, Pike complained to Baker:

The increasing number of natives from other districts of the province (especially Rufiji and Morogoro) who are coming to Dar es Salaam in search of employment shows no sign of decreasing, and in view of the food situation they should be discouraged. If they are in genuine need of employment, then they should be advised before leaving their home districts that there is plenty of work available on sisal estates in this district, but that employment in and around Dar es Salaam township is difficult to obtain. They may indeed be successful in obtaining employment if they are lucky, at a reasonable wage for a month or so, on some special works, but subsequently they will find themselves out of work and are then forced to take up employment with Indians at very low wages.<sup>33</sup>

At the Economic Control Board meeting in January 1944 it was reported that as a result of a poor harvest ‘six hundred natives had entered the town from Western Rufiji alone’.<sup>34</sup> ‘This drift’, observed Baker,

besides increasing the difficulties of the Administration means the withdrawal of agriculturalists from food production to non-productive, non-essential jobs and the tendency must be stopped. This constant stream of men further contributes to the considerable difficulties of the food situation and rationing in Dar es Salaam.<sup>35</sup>

In a letter to the Chief Secretary, Crawford, the secretary of the ECB, raised his concerns about the big increase in the consumption of ‘native foods’ in Dar es Salaam that year<sup>36</sup> –

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<sup>30</sup> The rate in the town remained at Shs11/- PAR for 1942, p.20.

<sup>31</sup> Report to the Labour Commissioner, Third Quarter 1943, TNA/61/14/30. See Bryceson, “Food supply”, for a discussion of rationing.

<sup>32</sup> PAR for 1943, p.25.

<sup>33</sup> DC, Dsm to Provicer, Dsm, 14<sup>th</sup> December 1943, TNA/61/443/1.

<sup>34</sup> Mins. of meeting of ECB, 4<sup>th</sup> January 1944, TNA/61/443/1.

<sup>35</sup> Provicer, Dsm to Political, Rufiji, Morogoro and Bagamoyo, 21<sup>st</sup> 1943.

<sup>36</sup> Crawford to CS, 13<sup>th</sup> January 1944, TNA/28685.

consumption had increased from 3,000 bags in June to 7,000 in December.<sup>37</sup> Meanwhile the registration of all African townsmen that had preceded the introduction of rationing had revealed that Dar es Salaam's population had increased by over 10,000 since the outbreak of war.<sup>38</sup> Indeed, by late 1943, conditions in Tanganyika's main towns had become so severe that -'in order to prevent further overcrowding and the concomitant aggravation of existing conditions'- it was decided to restrict the immigration of non-natives into Dar es Salaam and Tanga.<sup>39</sup>

It became increasingly clear, even to those without first hand experience of conditions in the town, that something had to be done. Starting in 1943, a vigorous debate was conducted amongst officials at all levels of the colonial administration, from district officers to Whitehall mandarins, over the best means of controlling accelerated migration to the towns. Those officials who were most directly affected by this phenomenon pressed for legislation which established more than just the power to expel undesirable occupants from the urban areas. The Labour Commissioner, Hickson-Mahoney, for instance, envisaged the need for both the control of immigration to the town and the restriction of juvenile employment, in addition to the repatriation of 'unemployed undesirables'.<sup>40</sup> Baker agreed, but was anxious that there should be as little interference as possible with the freedom of the individual.<sup>41</sup> He was also keen that any new legislation should apply to all races, something Whittle, another senior government official, considered impractical, the proposed legislation being in his opinion 'only needed and only politically possible for Africans'.<sup>42</sup>

In effect any machinery to restrict African movement within the territory amounted to a pass system. There was still resistance to the introduction of such drastic measures. With the situation in the towns so serious, however, and -thanks to the return of growing numbers of demobilised soldiers- only likely to get worse, it was pointed out to the Chief Secretary that such a move should now be contemplated:

we must expect a considerable influx into the larger townships of men discontented with

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<sup>37</sup> ECB Mins., 4<sup>th</sup> January 1944, TNA 28685.

<sup>38</sup> PAR for 1943, p.24.

<sup>39</sup> Governor Jackson to Sec. State for the Colonies, 27<sup>th</sup> November 1943, TNA/31751.

<sup>40</sup> Sec. Min. 11<sup>th</sup> March 1943, TNA/28685.

<sup>41</sup> Baker min., 17<sup>th</sup> March 1943, TNA/28685.

<sup>42</sup> Sec. Min. by Whittle, 26<sup>th</sup> March 1943, TNA/28685.



tribal conditions and attracted by the more sophisticated conditions of township life. This raises a very important question in a pressing form, as to whether it will not be essential that some system of closer control over townships will not become necessary. There have been various discussions at different times on the advisability of some type of pass system, and I think that on the whole the general opinion is opposed to it, and it has of course aspects which are much disliked by many shades of opinion. Nonetheless I think the question calls for serious consideration under the new conditions we will have to face after the war and I think this point is one of the most important that should be seriously discussed in all its aspects at the Provincial Commissioners' conference.<sup>43</sup>

The previous year, Baker had studied the pass regulations in place in Natal under the Native (Urban Areas) Act but had considered them 'harsh and unsuited to Dar es Salaam'.<sup>44</sup> Seven months on, he was inclined to look upon the South African system in a more positive light.<sup>45</sup>

By the time of the 1943 Provincial Commissioners' conference, held between 23<sup>rd</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> August, draft legislation to facilitate the removal of undesirable elements had been prepared for discussion. Addressing the conference, Baker stated that this legislation was fine as far as it went, but –like the temporary legislation passed under the wartime Defence Regulations in the wake of the McRoberts ruling- it only allowed for removal after entry, which was not enough. Further legislation was required to prevent the original movement to the urban areas. Only this initial legislation was endorsed by the conference participants, however, eventually passing into law in early 1944 as the Townships (Removal of Undesirable Natives) Ordinance (Cap.104). According to the accompanying 'objects and reasons':

The powers to be taken under this Bill to remove undesirable natives from the townships and other populated areas to their districts of origin or to other suitable locality within the Territory are considered necessary in the interests both of the natives themselves and of orderly life within such areas.<sup>46</sup>

The ordinance incorporated a number of safeguards designed to 'avoid the *appearance* of arbitrary or discriminating treatment' (my emphasis) including definitions of potential culprits and powers of appeal to Provincial Commissioners and (eventually) the Governor. Whilst the ordinance did provide a stricter definition of who may be deemed an undesirable than previous legislation, it remained broad enough to include a good proportion of the urban African population. Alongside those who had 'no regular means

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<sup>43</sup> Sec. Min. by W.E.J., 7<sup>th</sup> May 1943, TNA/61/702/3.

<sup>44</sup> Baker to CS, 16<sup>th</sup> July 1942, TNA/28685.

<sup>45</sup> Baker to CS, 16<sup>th</sup> March 1943, TNA/61/443/1.

of employment or other reputable means of livelihood', 'natives having no settled home within the township' were subject to repatriation – the 'settled native' being one who was either liable to house tax or who had paid poll tax for the current and previous year.<sup>47</sup> This meant that any labourer engaged in casual employment could be classed as undesirable; as could any African who, arriving in town within the current tax year, had not paid municipal poll tax the previous year. The ordinance was also racially discriminatory in character (it was the 'Removal of Undesirable *Natives*' Ordinance).

Despite the wide powers bestowed by the ordinance upon urban officials to deal with the surplus urban population, the Governor made it clear in a letter to the Secretary of State for the Colonies that yet further legislation was required. According to the Governor, the bill was 'a first instalment of legislation of a more drastic character which will be required to deal with post-war conditions':

The existing problems resulting from the drift of population from rural to urban areas - unemployment, vagrancy and juvenile delinquency - are such as to call for positive remedial action and are likely to increase rather than diminish. When these problems become further complicated by the presence of the demobilised element, it will probably be necessary to re-inforce the powers of compulsory repatriation under the legislation now proposed by introducing wider measures to control entry into townships.<sup>48</sup>

In response to the Governor's letter, J.V. Wild, a Colonial Office official, pointed out that the problem of the drift to the town was not restricted to Tanganyika; both the Governor of Uganda and the British Resident in Zanzibar having expressed similar concerns. He remained sceptical, nevertheless, of any initiatives to restrict African mobility:

Personally, I do not think that legislation to prevent entry into the townships would be justified unless it were complimentary to development plans in the native areas. It is clear from the Governor's despatch that he is not merely concerned with juveniles, corner boys, or degenerates. The measures which he forecasts are to be directed against what he describes as the demobilised element. It is a little unfortunate that the first hint we should have had of the Governor's plans for dealing with demobilised soldiers should have been this negative, not to say repressive, measures. These men have become accustomed to cinemas, canteens, and the like, and unless such facilities are made available to them elsewhere, I do not think it would be right to deny them where they already exist.

The solution may be to teach Africans to build and run their own villages and towns, but at present life in the native areas is not sufficiently attractive to justify us in forcing all men to remain there.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Draft bill in PRO/CO/691/185/42431.

<sup>47</sup> See sec.2 of the Townships (Removal of Undesirable Natives) Ordinance, GN. No.6 of 1944.

<sup>48</sup> Letter from Governor Jackson, 15<sup>th</sup> November 1943, PRO/CO/691/185/42431.

<sup>49</sup> Min. by J.V.Wild, 6<sup>th</sup> December 1943, PRO/CO/691/185/42431.

Such concerns were shared by others at the Colonial Office. K.W. Blaxter, the Assistant Secretary for Social Services, concurred with Wild's view that the improvement of rural conditions was an important factor in stemming the rural-urban flow:

[T]he Governor speaks of the need for powers to control movement etc., that is to say, measures of restraint, but he does not seem to have considered very closely whether something cannot be done by way of making village life more interesting etc, as a means of checking the movement to the towns. When the demobilised soldiers return to their mud huts, they will hope for something more by way of local activity to keep them interested than they did before they enlisted....<sup>50</sup>

Officials in Dar es Salaam, under increasing pressure from the persistent drift to the town, were less mindful of rural initiatives as a solution to the problem. In January 1944, the secretary of the Economic Control Board had recommended to Government that:

some form of restriction should be imposed on the entry of natives to the township of Dar es Salaam and that complementary powers should be given to the Administration to repatriate natives found in the town without the necessary authority. It had now become a matter of the first importance that the native population of Dar es Salaam should be stabilised, or if possible, decreased, and steps should be taken to prevent the influx of non-resident natives into the town due to food conditions obtaining in the areas outside.<sup>51</sup>

In response to these demands Baker and Whittle drew up draft Defence (Entry of Natives into Townships: Restriction) Regulations -prohibiting the entry into (specified) towns of all but residents and those with permanent employment- which were sent to London for approval.

At the Colonial Office, information coming in of the deteriorating situation in Tanganyikan towns had caused Wild to reassess the situation:

Something clearly has to be done about the entry of natives into townships... when the food and housing shortage is acute. Making life in the native areas more attractive and building more houses in the towns are measures which at present are unfortunately out of the question on a sufficiently large scale and more direct action is needed.

He considered that conscription of unwanted migrants to work on plantations 'would probably have a salutary effect on the townward trend, and would be a better form of direct action than merely driving them back to idleness in the tribal areas.'<sup>52</sup> In the event

<sup>50</sup> Min. (by Mr. Blaxter?), 11<sup>th</sup> January 1944, PRO/CO/691/185/42431.

<sup>51</sup> ECB mins., 4<sup>th</sup> January 1944, TNA/61/443/1.

<sup>52</sup> 'Something of this sort has been tried in Zanzibar with some success', Wild observed. 'Idlers in town have been made to cultivate food crops on plots allotted to them in the neighbourhood of the towns, and

it was decided simply to go along with the proposals from Tanganyika, and the Secretary of State for the Colonies duly communicated his assent to the introduction of the proposed legislation which was passed as the Defence (Entry of Natives into Townships: Restriction) Regulations.<sup>53</sup> The regulations made it illegal for an 'alien' native to remain in the town for longer than 48 hours without reporting to the Township Authority and obtaining a permit allowing him to do so.

In the wake of the regulations becoming law, disagreements surfaced amongst Tanganyikan officials over whether permits should be required of all residents in the town or only those who were new arrivals.<sup>54</sup> It appears that this –and a lack of staff to implement the legislation– eventually resulted in the complete neglect of the regulations.<sup>55</sup> Instead, within months of their being passed, officials began clamouring once again for further, more permanent legislation.<sup>56</sup> At a meeting held to discuss the problem of urban drift in May 1944, both the Municipal Secretary, Helps, and Pike, now acting as Deputy Provincial Commissioner, argued that control of entry into Dar es Salaam would be necessary after the war, and in conclusion Governor Jackson stated that he wanted new legislation to be ready for this eventuality.<sup>57</sup> At a subsequent meeting in September, agreement was reached that a system of native registration should be introduced. This, the meeting concluded, would not involve any hardships for natives, being on the contrary a beneficial measure. It was decided that all male Africans –it was considered undesirable to apply it to Europeans or Asians– liable to tax in the town should be issued with a permit. Women and children under twelve were exempted.<sup>58</sup> A draft bill was drawn up 'for the registration of inhabitants and control of entry into the towns'.<sup>59</sup> If the town was not to be 'flooded with unemployed loafers and potential criminals', wrote Governor Jackson, then more effective legislation had to be introduced for 'this serious social evil' to be dealt with.<sup>60</sup> Others were more dubious about the proposals. Chief Secretary Sandford warned against a 'walled city policy', observing that an unfeasibly

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this action has had a good effect throughout the Protectorate and not merely in the urban areas directly affected.' Min. by J.V.Wild, 26<sup>th</sup> February 1944, PRO/CO/691/191/42431.

<sup>53</sup> GN No.80 of 1944.

<sup>54</sup> See Min. by Lamb, 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1944, TNA/28685.

<sup>55</sup> See comments by PC, EP in mins. of meeting, 5<sup>th</sup> September 1944, TNA/28685.

<sup>56</sup> See mins. by Lamb, 12<sup>th</sup> May 1944, and Jackson, 13<sup>th</sup> May 1944, TNA/28685.

<sup>57</sup> See mins. of meeting, 19<sup>th</sup> May 1944, TNA/28685.

<sup>58</sup> Mins. of meeting, 5<sup>th</sup> September 1944, TNA/28685.

<sup>59</sup> At f.123a, TNA/28685.

<sup>60</sup> Min., 13<sup>th</sup> October 1944, TNA 28685.

'huge apparatus of control' to check daily entry to and occupation in the town would be required to implement such a scheme.<sup>61</sup> In the end, the proposed legislation (which had the firm support of Governor Jackson) fell victim to changes in the administration; both in London and Dar es Salaam. On hearing of the proposals, Andrew Cohen -the new head of the Africa department at the Colonial Office- wrote to Sandford that they bore too great a resemblance to South African and Rhodesian systems of population control.<sup>62</sup> Meanwhile, at a meeting in Dar es Salaam to discuss the draft bill, William Battershill, who had just replaced Jackson as Governor of Tanganyika, opened proceedings by declaring his 'vast objections' to the proposed legislation both in principle and detail.<sup>63</sup> Four days later Battershill informed Cohen that he would 'hear nothing more about this Bill.'<sup>64</sup> Whilst concern over conditions in the African township of Dar es Salaam was widely felt, in the end political considerations ruled out the introduction of legislation aimed at restricting African mobility. Although it was never explicitly referred to as a factor, Tanganyika's mandatory status made any kind of pass system untenable.

### Rural initiatives

Thwarted in their attempts to legislate against rural-urban migration, district officials were forced to turn their attention to the principal source of their woes; the rural areas of Eastern Province. Starting in the early 1940s, Dar es Salaam district office requested that *Tangazo* (Notices) discouraging the move to town be announced in villages throughout Eastern Province. In June 1942, for example, the DC contacted his counterpart in Kisarawe requesting that:

notice be sent out again to the effect that 1) NO WORK [emphasis in original] is obtainable in the town 2) and any person from the district found in the town without good reason will be severely dealt with. 'Good reason' does not include sporadic work with Indians.<sup>65</sup>

Five days later a similar message was communicated to the DC in Utete.<sup>66</sup> The following (amended) notice was forwarded by the Utete-Rufiji District Office to headmen to

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<sup>61</sup> Min., 13<sup>th</sup> October 1944, TNA/28685.

<sup>62</sup> Cohen to CS, 10<sup>th</sup> April 1945, TNA/28685.

<sup>63</sup> Mins. of meeting, 1<sup>st</sup> August 1944, TNA/28685.

<sup>64</sup> Battershill to Cohen, 5<sup>th</sup> August 1945, TNA/28685.

<sup>65</sup> Political, Uz., Dsm, to Political, Kisarawe, Pugu, 12<sup>th</sup> June 1942, TNA/540/27/13.

<sup>66</sup> Political, Uz., Dsm, to Political, Utete, 17<sup>th</sup> June 1942, TNA/540/27/13.

announce to their villagers:

Many people -especially youths- are coming from Rufiji District to Dar es Salaam Township to look for work. Residents themselves cannot get jobs now as they have been outnumbered by '*Wahuni*' who are increasing day by day. Every effort is being made to return these youngsters and I would be most grateful if you would announce to the youths over there that there are no job opportunities and that they should not come to Dar es Salaam if they do not have a confirmed job as anyone without a job will be severely punished.<sup>67</sup>

The letter which accompanied the announcement exhorted the headmen to put pressure on the parents of young adults:

It is up to the elders to convince their youths to stay at home. It's up to the elders to help them find a wife.

This year the father of a child who has gone to Dar es Salaam will pay his tax without hesitation and all those who have been exempted from taxes will be re-entered in the tax book if their children leave to go to Dar es Salaam without permission.

The childrens' mistakes are the elders mistakes because it is up to the elders to teach their children from childhood to behave properly.<sup>68</sup>

Such propaganda appears to have had limited success. As a result further initiatives were forthcoming. In response to complaints received from Uzaramu headmen in 1943, who asked for permission to prohibit any person -man, woman or child- from coming to the town without obtaining a written permit from his *Wakili* to do so, Baker recommended that the most appropriate course of action was for Eastern Province Native Authorities to begin issuing *ruhusa ya njia*:

2. It would be simple for the Uzaramo Native Authorities to issue an order under Sec 8(j) of the Native Authorities Ordinance but I am uncertain whether AOs, the *Liwali* and the town headmen have power to remove persons found in Dar es Salaam without the required permit.

3. Such an order would carry a very much wider range than is contemplated in the draft 'Township (Restriction of Natives) Rules, 1943', but the initiative displayed by the Zaramu *Wakilis* and elders is worthy of encouragement and I shall be glad to see brought into effect an order which will help considerably to control the immigration of undesirables into Dar es Salaam.

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<sup>67</sup> P.L. Nairac for the DC, Utete-Rufiji to *Mwenyemzi/Mtawala* vote [all headmen and chiefs], 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1942, TNA/540/27/13 (Original in Swahili). The original (English) text from which this notice was adapted survives in Political, Uzaramo, Dsm to Political, Utete, 17<sup>th</sup> June 1942.

<sup>68</sup> P.L. Nairac for the DC, Utete-Rufiji, 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1942, TNA/540/27/13. Original in Swahili – my translation.

4. It is possible that the Native Authorities of Rufiji district and possibly those of Morogoro may wish to issue a similar restriction of Africans moving into Dar es Salaam.<sup>69</sup>

Two months on, DC Pike lent *his* weight to such measures to inhibit movement to the capital, arguing that all natives proceeding to Dar es Salaam should be given a travel permit by their Native Authority.<sup>70</sup> The message was passed on accordingly to the district commissioners in Rufiji, Morogoro and Bagamoyo, who were asked to relay it to their Native Authorities, whilst simultaneously adopting '[a]ll other possible means... to keep these people on the land and to stop the drift to the town.'<sup>71</sup> Without allocating increased resources to controlling unregulated movement into the towns, however, the ploy of getting Native Authorities to issue travel permits was merely a stopgap measure, and not a particularly effective one at that. Whilst it may have discouraged the initial movement, once an African had left his home district lack of a permit to travel did not constitute any offence against the territorial laws. When, two years later, at the 1946 Eastern Province District Commissioners' conference, the feasibility of a Native Authority prohibition on entry into towns was discussed, it was 'decided that the machinery required to make such an order effective was impracticable at present.' 'It was agreed' instead, 'that Native Authorities should constantly be advised to discourage by active propaganda the drift of their people to the townships.'<sup>72</sup> A regime which could not afford to implement some form of pass system, either financially, or, in the final analysis, politically, and which simultaneously was hard pressed to effect any improvement in conditions of life in the countryside, could in the end only resort to 'active propaganda' amongst rural communities to attempt to stem the drift to the towns.

### **Influx control in the 1950s**

As had occurred in the latter part of the previous decade, the unemployment problem in Dar es Salaam faded somewhat in the late-1940s. A post-war building boom and enhanced port activity, along with a generally more vibrant economy, helped absorb surplus labour within the town as well as providing employment for enough of the large

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<sup>69</sup> Baker to CS, 6<sup>th</sup> October 1943, TNA/61/443/1.

<sup>70</sup> DC, Dsm to PC, 14<sup>th</sup> December 1943, TNA/61/443/1.

<sup>71</sup> PC, Dsm to Political, Rufiji, Morogoro and Bagamoyo, 21<sup>st</sup> December 1943, TNA/61/443/1.

<sup>72</sup> Mins. of DCs' Conference, EP, held week commencing 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1946, TNA/61/502/pt.1.

numbers of migrants entering the capitol for it not to become a serious problem.<sup>73</sup> Unemployment, the DC observed in 1949, was 'generally voluntary'.<sup>74</sup> However, by the early-1950s the situation had once again begun to deteriorate. In 1953, the Labour Officer recorded 'noticeable unemployment' in the town for the first time in many years.<sup>75</sup> The following year, the *Tanganyika Standard* was reporting the presence of around 20,000 unemployed Africans in and around town.<sup>76</sup> Whilst this figure is implausible, and was refuted by the Labour Department at the time, it is clear that unemployment had once again re-emerged as a serious problem. A growth rate which between the censuses of 1948 and 1957 worked out at over seven per cent per annum was largely responsible, although by the end of this period stabilisation and the more economical use of labour by employers was also leading to a contraction in the job market.<sup>77</sup> Despite the re-emergence of serious joblessness, Africans continued to stream to the town. Wages were rising, and whilst acquiring employment immediately was unlikely, informal economic activities provided an opportunity to obtain a subsistence whilst awaiting a formal job, or failing that relatives could be relied upon for support. An increase in school-leavers (Standard VI and above) after WWII, whose education fitted them for work in the 'modern' as opposed to the agricultural sector, was also partly responsible for the influx of immigrants.<sup>78</sup>

Whilst unemployment emerged once again, the problem of overcrowding had never gone away. By 1950, Dar es Salaam's public health committee was drawing attention to extreme overcrowding in the African and Asian areas, which, according to the Medical Officer, was 'affecting the health of the community and especially the normal development of children.'<sup>79</sup> Although the situation was to some extent ameliorated by the construction of public housing in the course of the 1950s, crisis was only averted through the relaxation of building regulations, and by unauthorised African building in urban 'village' areas such as Buguruni, Keko and Mikorosheni. Meanwhile, with limited resources at its disposal, the municipality was unable to provide public services for all the

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<sup>73</sup> Between the end of the war and 1952 the Tanganyika economy experienced a healthy rate of growth, principally thanks to rising sisal prices. In 1953, however, there was a downturn in foreign trade and it was not until 1959 that 1952 rates were once again reached. See C. Ehrlich, "The Poor Country: The Tanganyika Economy from 1945 to Independence", in Low and Smith, *History of East Africa*, (Oxford, 1976).

<sup>74</sup> Kisarawe AR for 1949, para.16.

<sup>75</sup> Labour Office DAR for 1953, p.2, TNA/61/503/Vol.III.

<sup>76</sup> *TS*, 28<sup>th</sup> December 1954.

<sup>77</sup> Leslie, *Survey*, p.123.

<sup>78</sup> Cttee of Enquiry into problems of African housing mins, 18<sup>th</sup> December 1953, TNA/225/DC01/3/23.



planned areas, never mind the numerous 'village' communities within the town.<sup>80</sup> It was this over-stretched urban infrastructure, alongside increasing un- and under-employment, which formed the backdrop for a renewed outbreak of official anxiety about urban growth in the early 1950s, in the course of which arguments about the desirability, practicality and morality of influx control all resurfaced once again.

The issue of influx control had slipped off the agenda in the period after WWII. This can be related to the decline in unemployment. Equally though, it can be attributed to the difficulty in coming up with a system of controlling African mobility which would satisfy both urban administrators and officials in the Secretariat and at the Colonial Office who were sensitive to potential criticism from UN overseers. 'This problem', wrote the Uzaramo DC in response to a request for items for debate at a forthcoming conference in 1946, 'has been discussed without much profit at the last two conferences and further discussion may be equally inconclusive.'<sup>81</sup> Thanks to these difficulties, any proposals for restricting rural-urban migration had been abandoned after the war. In the absence of more comprehensive legislation, Dar es Salaam officials relied upon Cap.104 (the Townships (Removal of Undesirable Natives) Ordinance) and the Employment of Women and Young Persons Ordinance to deal with the surplus population. In order to stem the flow of juveniles to the town, 'continual and active steps' were taken to ensure that Sections 3(a) and 4 of the employment ordinance –which prohibited the employment of children except under certain conditions- were being observed.<sup>82</sup> The principle weapon against unwanted immigrants though, remained Cap. 104. As more and more Africans found their way to the capital, repatriation through the use of this ordinance became an increasingly common phenomenon.

Despite its importance to urban administrators, however, Cap.104 was not immune from criticism. '[A]ny severe application of this law,' acknowledged the acting Chief Secretary in 1946, 'or any extension of the control of movement of persons, would be an invasion of the liberty of the subject.'<sup>83</sup> Meanwhile, officials in Whitehall remained distinctly uneasy. The Kenyan government had, in May 1946, attempted to have an

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<sup>79</sup> TS, 15<sup>th</sup> April 1950, p.10.

<sup>80</sup> Min by Director of Town Planning, 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1953, TNA/225/DC3602.

<sup>81</sup> Political, Uzaramo to PC,EP, 1<sup>st</sup> August 1946, TNA/61/502/pt.1.

<sup>82</sup> Mins of DC's conference, EP, 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1946, TNA/61/502/pt.1.

<sup>83</sup> Legco questions 25<sup>th</sup> July 1946, TNA/20887/Vol.II.

ordinance along similar lines endorsed by the Colonial Office. It was reported later that Creech Jones, the Colonial Secretary,

objected to 'its discriminatory nature, which is reflected both in its title and provisions'. In addition he considered that the provisions imposed drastic conditions on the rights of the individual which could not be justified in normal peace time conditions, and he doubted whether there were adequate safeguards to ensure its proper administration.<sup>84</sup>

He went on to state his desire that early steps be taken to repeal the equivalent ordinance in Tanganyika.<sup>85</sup> The Tanganyika government was instructed to consult with Kenya over the terms of a new ordinance which would replace Cap.104.<sup>86</sup> In response to these criticisms the application of the ordinance was, in January 1947, restricted to six major townships; Dar es Salaam, Morogoro, Tanga, Korogwe, Moshi and Arusha. However, this remained the extent of the action taken by officials, who, appearing to stall for time, failed to respond to further Colonial Office correspondence on the issue after a revised ordinance was passed in Kenya in September 1949.<sup>87</sup>

If these were indeed delaying tactics, then the motivation behind them is readily apparent. Far from going away, concern over rural-urban migration re-emerged with particular force after the violent outcome of the 1950 strike. The heightened public awareness of urban lawlessness that arose in the wake of the strike led to growing demands to tackle the 'surplus' urban population. 'No law-abiding citizen', wrote the editor of the *Tanganyika Standard* in March 1950,

will oppose any step taken to eliminate all doubtful characters from our midst... [T]he faster these undesirables of no fixed abode or occupation are sent out of town and back to their own villages, the sooner will it be possible for their housing accommodation to be made available to really deserving cases at present living in overcrowded quarters.<sup>88</sup>

A correspondent to the newspaper advocated the introduction of a pass system along the lines of that which operated in Kenya,<sup>89</sup> a view which was endorsed later in the year by the Dar es Salaam Chamber of Commerce who 'wanted to see a system of registration as comprehensive as possible – like the *kipande* system in Kenya, which recorded past

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<sup>84</sup> Quoted in Memo. no.68, 6<sup>th</sup> May 1952, TNA/21616/Vol.III.

<sup>85</sup> Min. by E.L. Scott to P. Rogers, 30<sup>th</sup> November 1950, PRO/CO/691/208/42431.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Letters in February and April 1950 from the CO were ignored. PRO/CO/691/208/42431.

<sup>88</sup> TS, 18<sup>th</sup> March 1950, p.21.

<sup>89</sup> Letter from 'Old Resident', TS, 9<sup>th</sup> February 1950.

employment and wages.<sup>90</sup> The *Standard* thought the Chamber's proposals deserved 'full support':

A good start has been made by the Labour Department over registration of dock workers. Carried a step further and made a universal practice, it would enable the authorities to check up immediately on all and sundry; it would eliminate the presence in the towns of parasites living on their fellows and would make the task of those concerned far easier in running to earth any illegal immigrants in our midst.<sup>91</sup>

To the dismay of the *Standard*, however, no such system was introduced. After a series of crimes and muggings occurred later in the decade the paper's editor returned to the subject:

From such lawlessness it can be assumed that there must be hundreds, probably thousands, of people wandering the streets of the town without regular employment which would do away with the necessity to resort to crime for a livelihood, and it is a known fact that most of these are Africans without any means of support whatsoever, who pass the night on the lookout for easy money, unless asleep in the corner of some hovel or other.

These homeless, jobless, ne'er-do-wells have no intention of doing an honest day's work, and what is worse, they never will work so long as they can remain in town with little fear of being found out.

How different it would be if every person had to satisfy the police as to where he worked, where he lived, and -at night- what he was doing in the streets or open spaces. We hazard a guess that a real round-up in Dar es Salaam alone would reveal the presence of at least 10,000 'of no fixed occupation or abode'.

It is a very serious problem and one that can only be dealt with by the fullest co-operation between the residents of the town and the police. Some people say it is a disgrace to carry a passport or registration card or other form of identification, or have his fingerprints taken... But why should anyone object, unless he has something to be ashamed of and wants to hide?<sup>92</sup>

Whilst settler opinion lined up behind some form of registration of Africans, however, Africans themselves were resolutely opposed to such measures. 'Experience has shown', wrote one correspondent to the *Standard*,

that non-native business people and settlers plan and do things to their advantage; and they achieve the ends on objectives with ease because they receive little or no opposition from the natives who (at the present stage of their development) are less intelligent, and less vocal than their non-native counterpart.

It must be clear to all concerned that the Africans do not want to have that silly system of *kipande* that inconvenienced so much our African brothers in Kenya. Time and again

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<sup>90</sup> *TS*, 1<sup>st</sup> July 1950.

<sup>91</sup> *TS*, 1<sup>st</sup> April 1950, p.20.

<sup>92</sup> *TS*, 27<sup>th</sup> February 1954, p.4.

Africans used to be stopped by the Kenya police who would ask them to produce their *kipande*.

...It is premature at present to introduce any system of identification upon the African. Do you think your *kipande* or ID card will have any meaning to a Mgogo or Mporoto? The answer is: No, thank you. The African wants nothing of a passport for his identification. If you think he has not got to the stage of having such a 'Universal ID document' as defined by one of your readers on April 8 then leave him alone. If you want to be of service to the African don't idle time away by sitting down and talking of identification and other trivial things. If you want to help the African give him sound education by establishing more and better schools and technical colleges; help him to achieve better health by establishing better and more modern organisations and schemes; concentrate in teaching him better ways of agriculture to preserve the fertility of the soil, then the whole world will congratulate you.<sup>93</sup>

In April 1950, when the municipal Public Health Committee recommended that the attention of central government be drawn to the need to control migration to the town so that overcrowding could be alleviated, an African councillor, Ali Meli, had argued against the proposals on the ground that this was 'a political measure rather than one of health'; unsurprisingly, perhaps, his amendment was defeated.<sup>94</sup>

Despite African disquiet over population control measures and Colonial Office anxiety about Cap.104, the Tanganyikan administration were unwilling to concede ground on the issue. In his eventual reply to correspondence from London, Surridge, the Chief Secretary, dismissed such concerns over the liberty of the colonial subject under prevailing conditions:

at this time of rapid development, especially in Dar es Salaam, it is already difficult enough for the supply of food and accommodation to keep pace with demand, and we feel that methods of control which might not be justifiable in normal times should be allowed to continue for the time being.<sup>95</sup>

Cap.104, he argued, was in any case regarded by Dar es Salaam officials 'more in the light of a humanitarian measure by which the DC can repatriate quasi-criminals rather than imprison them.' The Colonial Office nevertheless continued to urge the Tanganyikan administration to consider substituting Cap.104 with milder legislation. Officials in Dar es Salaam retorted that the maintenance of the existing ordinance was the very least that was required in the circumstances. The Attorney General, for instance,

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<sup>93</sup> Letter from Kenneth Msomali, Sumbawanga, TS 6<sup>th</sup> May 1950, p.27.

<sup>94</sup> TS, 15<sup>th</sup> April 1950, p.10.

<sup>95</sup> Surridge to Rogers(CO), 4<sup>th</sup> January 1951, TNA/21616/Vol.III.

held that 'the most effective course would be to have Cap.104 *plus* provision for registration.'<sup>96</sup> (My emphasis).

In May 1952, as a sop to Whitehall, it was suggested that Cap.104 be scrapped but that repatriations should continue as usual under the Destitute Persons Ordinance which gave similar powers over unemployed Africans. After discussion by the Executive Council, however, the proposal was rebuffed as the time was 'inappropriate'. '[I]n view of the opposition to the withdrawal of the Ordinance locally,' it was observed, 'it would be very difficult to make any change now.'<sup>97</sup> Indeed, towards the end of the year, Governor Twining requested permission from the Colonial Office to extend the application of Cap.104 to three more towns; Mwanza, Musoma and Shinyanga. 'I consider', he wrote,

that in spite of the objections which have been raised to its continued use, the Ordinance should continue in force and I must emphasize that I am supported in this view by responsible public, as well as official, opinion.<sup>98</sup>

In the face of the persistent defence of Cap.104 by Tanganyikan officials, the Colonial Office finally conceded that it could remain on the statute book. However, it was insisted that the ordinance be amended. First, to remove the 'unfettered discretion of the executive' bestowed by the existing legislation (under which appeal against decisions by a DC was to the Provincial Commissioner), and second, to address its' racially discriminatory nature. In July 1953 an amended ordinance was passed.<sup>99</sup> It enabled (in theory) action to be taken against undesirable *persons* not just natives, and appeal was allowed to the District Court (with eventual appeal to the High Court). Meanwhile, the stipulation to be liable to house tax or to have paid poll tax for the current and previous year in order to prove urban residence was also changed to one of parents legally residing in the town or able to prove residence there for at least 18 months out of the last two years.

Whilst officials in Tanganyika may have been satisfied with the retention of Cap.104, many of those responsible for urban administration were soon stressing once again the necessity for further controls over African mobility. Between 1948 and 1952 the African

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<sup>96</sup> Min. by AG, 31<sup>st</sup> March 1952, TNA/21616/Vol.III.

<sup>97</sup> Note for PCs' conference, July 1952, TNA/21616/Vol.III.

<sup>98</sup> Twining to Rogers(CO), 21<sup>st</sup> November 1952, TNA/21616/Vol.III.

<sup>99</sup> Townships (Removal of Undesirable Persons) Ordinance, No.15 of 1953.

population in Dar es Salaam had increased by over 50 per cent, with 26,565 more Africans residing in the capital in the latter year. 'Constant, uncontrolled and uncontrollable immigration', complained the DC in 1953, 'is a very serious problem and must if allowed to continue, ultimately threaten the whole working of the Municipality'.<sup>100</sup> He bemoaned the inefficacy of the existing machinery for tackling the surplus population. Those responsible for housing in the city were equally concerned. Earlier in the year the Director of Town Planning had written of a 'basic error ...in quietly accepting the phenomenal increase of African population in towns.'<sup>101</sup> 'Some means', he concluded, 'will have to be found of limiting this continual immigration from country areas, if only to put a firm limit on the urban housing problem.' The Labour Commissioner was another who viewed the situation with some anxiety:

The movement from rural into urban areas of adult males and to a lesser extent of juveniles still gives cause for concern. Ostensibly such individuals may be said to be seeking employment but judging from the relatively small number who register for work at employment exchanges it is probable that the greater proportion are attracted to the towns by the possibility of making a living by dubious means.<sup>102</sup>

A number of proposals were put forward from various quarters to address the situation. The Labour Commissioner considered that compulsory registration at an Employment Exchange of all incomers to Dar es Salaam would be a solution to the problem.<sup>103</sup> After a visit to Elisabethville, DC Harris advocated the introduction of identity cards such as those used in the Belgian Congo.<sup>104</sup> The issue was a perennial on the agenda of the Provincial Commissioners' conferences in the mid-1950s. Each time different recommendations were made, yet none were acted upon. In July 1954, Provincial Commissioners urged that businesses using casual migrant labour in Dar es Salaam be restricted to employing just three or four casuals (unless the Labour Department permitted more), as was the case in Mombasa.<sup>105</sup> In January the following year it was decided 'that a system of voluntary registration could with advantage be introduced in Dar es Salaam, and that this, while providing a most useful measure of

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<sup>100</sup> DAR for 1953, pp.7-8.

<sup>101</sup> Min., 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1953, TNA/225/DC/3602.

<sup>102</sup> Labour Dept. AR for 1953, p.33.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Harris' scheme was vetoed on the grounds that 'it would probably be said to be an infringement of the liberty of the subject and liable to arouse political opposition.' Harris, *Donkey's Gratitude*, p.320.

<sup>105</sup> PCs' Conference mins, July 1954, Item 39(B).

control, would be acceptable generally to the African population.'<sup>106</sup> Five months later, at their June conference, Provincial Commissioners were discussing no less than fourteen measures aimed at solving the problem of African immigration into towns (a problem 'of long standing but one which is progressively becoming of greater urgency').<sup>107</sup> These included action to be taken in Dar es Salaam itself; such as the introduction of an African Authority in the township with the powers and responsibilities of a Native Authority; the registration of new arrivals; and compulsory education to the age of fifteen. Meanwhile, several rural initiatives were promoted for discussion by the Commissioner for Eastern Province, who stressed that in Dar es Salaam it was 'apparent that unilateral action can do no more than maintain an already unsatisfactory status quo, at considerable expense.' Only one of the fourteen proposals received the whole hearted endorsement of the conference – the uncontroversial suggestion that a social survey of the immigrant and floating population be carried out in order to ascertain its seasonal fluctuations and motivations for the move to the town. On the other hand, compulsory registration, improvement of the machinery for removal of undesirables, and the application of a *cheti cha njia* (pass) system in the rural areas were all rejected once again. Even propaganda to emphasize the expense and difficulties of urban life to rural dwellers was ruled out, on the grounds that it could lead to a shortage of labour or to a demand for higher wages by urban workers.<sup>108</sup> Measures to control African mobility were, throughout the 1940s and 1950s, repeatedly repudiated on the basis of being too complicated or politically unacceptable or both. However, with the urban economy and infrastructure being put under increasing strain by the rural-urban flow of migrants, officials responsible for the administration of the capital continued to lobby central government for influx control measures which for political reasons it was compelled to refuse.

In his report on detribalisation in 1957, Molohan, who had previously been a strong advocate of such measures, appeared to understand this predicament. He completely ruled out the introduction of a pass system to Tanganyika, principally on the basis of its cost and likely (in)effectiveness. However, the drift of population to the town was acknowledged as a pressing problem, and Molohan put forward a number of other

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid., Jan. 1955, p.31.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., June 1955, App. D.

<sup>108</sup> For discussion of proposals see Ibid., June 1955, pp.25-27.

proposals to address the phenomenon, most of which were, for a change, acted upon.<sup>109</sup> To facilitate the operation of Cap.104, power to repatriate individuals was extended to the *Liwali* and *Wakili*. Another amendment to this ordinance made proof of urban residence more demanding; the length of time necessary to have dwelt in the town being stretched from eighteen months out of the previous two years to four out of the previous five years. As a further measure to discourage migration, an attempt was made to shift the cost of repatriation from Government (up till then costs had been covered by the provincial budget) onto the Native Authorities in the district to which undesirables were removed. Meanwhile, a voluntary registration scheme was initiated in Dar es Salaam, Arusha and Moshi, which, the Chief Secretary informed the Colonial Office, it was hoped would 'strengthen the status of the respectable.'<sup>110</sup> No records remain detailing the success or failure of this scheme, although with TANU so effectively organising opposition to the colonial government it is unlikely that there was much demand for the new identification cards. Molohan also recommended that a system of reporting the presence of new arrivals on a ward basis should be implemented in the town, and that the rules regulating casual labour in Mombasa should be examined with a view to duplicating them in Dar es Salaam. These proposals though, like countless others over the years, do not appear to have been acted upon.

Molohan's recommendations predominantly covered measures to be taken in the towns themselves. He was, however, also aware of the effect that conditions in the rural areas were likely to have on the drift to the town. 'If the rural areas are systematically developed', he wrote in his report, 'the attractions of town life may possibly diminish and immigration into the towns should be reduced.'<sup>111</sup> Molohan was bullish about improving conditions in the rural areas, and the impact this was already having on internal migration:

Since the end of WWII and more particularly during the last five years... it is possible to detect a new trend in Tanganyika. Whilst the urban areas continue to prove a magnet and attract the younger African... there are signs that economic development of the tribal areas and the introduction of more intensified and modern systems of agriculture, Africans are beginning to realise that with the greatly increased prices of agricultural products there are now as many, if not more, lucrative means of livelihood to be found on their own doorsteps than there were in the past and that it is as, if not more, profitable, and certainly less

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<sup>109</sup> The 'Ndola report' documents action taken upon Molohan's recommendations.

<sup>110</sup> CS to Gorell-Barnes(CO), 27<sup>th</sup> March 1957

<sup>111</sup> Molohan, *Detribalisation*, , para.94.



irksome, to work for oneself than for another for an equal and perhaps greater gain. The consequence has been a falling off in the number of men proceeding from certain tribal areas to the areas of employment, and I think it is unlikely that this tendency will decrease.<sup>112</sup>

It was an over-optimistic appraisal of the situation. Whilst a more dynamic rural economy was emerging in areas such as Chaggaland, and Buhaya, and other areas were the focus of colonial development initiatives (for example, cotton production in Sukumaland or the Ubena Wattle Scheme), the rural parts of Eastern Province –from which the bulk of Dar es Salaam’s population was drawn- were mostly underdeveloped and vulnerable to drought. In 1959, Eastern Province had the second smallest number of African agricultural marketing co-operatives in Tanganyika after Tanga Province (whose agriculture was dominated by the plantation sector) – just 27 compared to the 324 in Lake Province.<sup>113</sup> Conditions in the villages of Kisarawe, Rufiji, and Bagamoyo districts did little to diminish the allure of the metropolis amongst their younger inhabitants. Meanwhile, the introduction of a minimum wage in Dar es Salaam in 1957 was followed in 1958 by a poor harvest in Eastern Province, both of which made the urban option considerably more attractive to rural folk.<sup>114</sup> The adoption of the minimum wage compounded the problem doubly; whilst attracting migrants it also stimulated more economical use of labour on the part of urban employers, thus leading to a contraction in urban employment at a time of rapid population growth.<sup>115</sup> By 1958 the decision was made to use propaganda once again in the rural areas in order to discourage movement to the capital. Upcountry, labour officers stressed the restricted opportunities for employment there, whilst weekly radio broadcasts from Dar es Salaam transmitted the same cautionary message.<sup>116</sup> These efforts appeared to have little, if any, impact. The situation was complicated by the inappropriate schooling many officials felt rural children were receiving, which triggered dissatisfaction with rural life and work amongst African youth. ‘Districts sending their young folks to schools’, concluded a meeting of the Eastern Province Advisory Council in 1958, ‘were ‘rewarded’ by losing them to the towns.’ Members of the council criticised

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<sup>112</sup> Ibid., para.4.

<sup>113</sup> A. Coulsen, *Tanzania: A Political Economy* (Oxford, 1982), p.68.

<sup>114</sup> Labour Dept. ARs for 1957, p.43 (and 1958, p.19).

<sup>115</sup> Ibid., p.43.

<sup>116</sup> Labour Dept. AR for 1958, p.5.

Rural education... [for] breeding discontent, putting too much emphasis on book learning as opposed to crafts or husbandry, and producing people who wrongly despised the agricultural worker. It was felt that rural communities must be made more attractive, with the craftsman holding a more respected position in order to preserve a skilled and contented peasantry.<sup>117</sup>

Whilst lip service was paid towards the need to improve conditions in the rural areas, however, both the political will and the financial resources to take any action in this regard were noticeable by their absence.

This absence was highlighted by the arrival of a 'responsible' African government in 1960. Partly thanks to the anxiety felt by leading African politicians about the political threat posed by a large unemployed underclass in the towns, a number of rural development schemes aimed at drawing surplus labour away from the capital were initiated soon after TANU's assumption of internal self-rule.<sup>118</sup> Short-term 'palliatives' for urban unemployment were announced in November 1960. These included the conscription of 1,000 workers for road building in the rural areas. A further 500 were sent to clear land in the Kilombero Valley.<sup>119</sup> Once cleared, Kilombero was to serve as a location for longer term measures aimed at alleviating urban unemployment. According to the minutes of a cabinet meeting, these would entail: 'creative developments in new communities, thus offering counter-attractions to the excitements which led people to endure the discomforts of unemployment in large towns.'<sup>120</sup> Anticipating future national policies of population re-location and concentration it was recommended that '[l]ong-term schemes should be reviewed against the need for a full community life; they should therefore take account of the need for schools, villages and community development generally, as well as the provision of land and water.' Whilst these policies were to prove no more successful in arresting the rural-urban flow, in tackling the problems of over-urbanisation the first African administration –in contrast to its colonial predecessor- did at least show a willingness to adopt substantive measures other than those aimed simply at influx control.

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<sup>117</sup> *TS*, 26<sup>th</sup> June 1958, p.5.

<sup>118</sup> Mins of Meeting of Council of Ministers, 14<sup>th</sup> November 1960, PRO/CO/822/2962.

<sup>119</sup> Press Release, 15<sup>th</sup> November 1960, PRO/CO/822/2962.

<sup>120</sup> Mins of Meeting of Council of Ministers, 14<sup>th</sup> November 1960, PRO/CO/822/2962.

## Chapter Nine

### Purging the town: the removal of undesirables, 1941-1961

The rapid growth of Dar es Salaam's African population in the last two decades of colonial rule placed a district administration, lacking the financial resources, the manpower, and even -having as it did but limited knowledge about the movements, motivations and activities of African urban residents- the imagination to deal with this phenomenon, under increasing pressure to retain control over the urban arena. The formal economy was over-stretched, incapable, for most of the period, of providing sufficient employment opportunities for incoming migrants. Housing and the basic infrastructure in the African areas of town were similarly overburdened. The period saw the growth of self-help initiatives on the part of African urban residents. Unauthorised construction of housing boomed, with urban 'villages' such as Buguruni expanding apace, and 'shanty' settlements emerging in Makaburi and Chang'ombe after the war and at Mikorosheni (and elsewhere) in the 1950s.<sup>1</sup> Informal economic activity became increasingly common. The municipal and district administrations had limited influence over such informal initiatives, and whilst these activities provided needy individuals with a home and an income, they remained technically illegal, and were generally perceived of as illegitimate by urban officials. Their emergence signalled a loss of colonial control; as did the rise in crime in the post-war period. In apportioning blame for these urban ills, officials were inclined to point to African immigration as the principle factor. Tackling the 'surplus' urban African population was an essential element in any attempt to re-assert colonial control. As the town grew beyond the capacity of either the urban formal economy to sustain it or the municipal housing supply to provide it with sufficient legal accommodation, efforts were made to stabilise the African population. This was attempted partly through the adoption in the mid-to-late fifties of a revised policy towards urban labour. Equally important though -indeed more so in view of its added role in the

social control of the urban populace- was the increasing official intolerance displayed towards those Africans in the town without formal, full-time employment. Although colonial administrators had always disparaged the presence of jobless Africans in the urban centres, only rarely was action taken between the wars against individuals on these grounds alone. From the early 1940s, however, such action came to be seen as entirely justified and occurred with increasing regularity.

### Repatriation campaigns in the 1940s

There is a good deal of irony in the timing of Justice McRoberts ruling, in March 1941, that Township Rule 136(2) was an unjustifiable interference with the liberty of the colonial subject. Up to this time the machinery for repatriation had been used relatively sparsely, generally being restricted to African criminals. In the years 1938, 1939 and 1940 respectively only 32, 15 and 35 'undesirable sojourners with several criminal convictions' were forcibly removed from the town using this legislation.<sup>2</sup> Exceptional use of it against unemployed Africans appears to have been made in the inter-war period only at times of emergency such as the years following WWI, or in the early 1930s, when large-scale redundancies led to mass unemployment in the town. It was only *after* McRoberts' ruling, and the immediate re-introduction of repatriation legislation, that un- and under-employed Africans were singled out as a routine target of official action. Such measures were necessary in the eyes of urban administrators anxious about the re-emergence of an unemployment problem, which unlike the previous decade would this time not go away. Writing in response to McRoberts, immediately after his *ultra vires* ruling, Baker argued that it was

vital that unemployment and ill-doing must be checked so far as is possible in urban areas and, with this end in view, it is imperative that those who can find no work or are habitual criminals must be repatriated for their own good as well as that of the community.<sup>3</sup>

Such a view clearly carried weight. Within a month of rule 136(2) being declared *ultra vires* new repatriation legislation had been introduced (see Chapter Seven). These new regulations were soon being put into operation. Records survive of the repatriation of

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<sup>1</sup> Sofers' report, 21<sup>st</sup> April 1951, p.41 (TNA/18950/Vol.III); Leslie, *Survey*, pp.123/4.

<sup>2</sup> PC Baker to CS, 12<sup>th</sup> March 1941, TNA/61/688/5.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

fourteen youths from Dar es Salaam in early September 1941.<sup>4</sup> In reporting the expulsion of a further six 'undesirable natives' two weeks later, DC Revington remarked upon the 'likelihood of many more being repatriated in the next few months as it is considered that any native who has neglected to pay tax or is unemployed is an undesirable.'<sup>5</sup> McRoberts' judgment clearly had no impact on the actions of urban officials. Far from witnessing a decline in the forcible removal of unwanted Africans from the town in the months following the ruling, the groups against which the legislation was applied was extended and ever more frequent use was made of repatriation to control the urban population. The trend continued into 1942. That year the Commissioner for Prisons reported an 'abnormal number of Remand Juveniles' (83) being received at Dar es Salaam. This was due

to a 'Round-up' of undesirables for repatriation which occurred during the months of September and October. At that time, petty thefts and small gangs of thieves were definitely increasing, and there was a large number of Juveniles in the Township without proper guardianship, means of subsistence or homes. It was found that these Juveniles had drifted into the Township from outlying districts for the purpose of obtaining employment. They were first warned to return to their homes, but this warning having no effect, the Police and Native Authorities arrested 79 Juveniles. Within 24 hours they were handed over to the DC who effected repatriation.<sup>6</sup>

Some indication of the impact of these repatriation campaigns on the African consciousness can be gauged by the reaction to the arrest of 15 African 'vagabonds' in May 1944. In the wake of this action, Baker reported whisperings in the township that 'Africans were being taken from their houses at night, loaded into lorries and taken to an unknown destination.'<sup>7</sup> Another rumour current at the time had it that police had recently arrested 400 men in a single night. Such a figure is not entirely implausible. Three years later, in the last nine months of 1947, a massive total of 904 removal orders –which usually constituted a fraction of those picked up by the police in the first place- had been made under Cap.104.<sup>8</sup> It seems likely that the scale of repatriations in 1947 is an indication of official determination to reassert control over the town after the strike of September that year.

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<sup>4</sup> See record dated 11<sup>th</sup> September 1941, TNA/61/688/5.

<sup>5</sup> DC Revington to PC, 24<sup>th</sup> September 1941, TNA/61/688/5.

<sup>6</sup> Cmmr. for Prisons to CS, 4<sup>th</sup> November 1943, TNA/21122.

<sup>7</sup> Baker to DC, Uzaramo, 29<sup>th</sup> May 1944, TNA/540/3/58.

<sup>8</sup> Uzaramo DAR for 1947, p.16, TNA/540/1/4/B.

It is unfortunately impossible to gain an accurate impression of the extent to which the repatriation legislation was applied in the 1940s. Whilst records of specific campaigns have survived, they are, to say the least, patchy. It is clear, though, that repatriations increased substantially compared to the inter-war period as unemployment in the town grew. In 1939 the number of forced removals for the whole year totalled just 15. In September 1941 alone, at least 20 people were repatriated. The high level of action appears to have been sustained throughout the war years as officials attempted to retain a grip on the town, although few records have survived. A correspondent to the *Tanganyika Standard* in 1950 recalled that:

During the war Government decided that owing to the influx of Africans from up-country and the food situation in the town all Africans without work not domiciled in Dar es Salaam would be rounded up and sent back to their respective villages.<sup>9</sup>

By the end of the decade there is evidence of an even greater increase. The 904 Africans repatriated between March and December of 1947 has been mentioned. The bulk of this large total of repatriatees can admittedly perhaps best be accounted for as the victims of a concerted post-strike campaign. However, following this, intermittent action continued to be taken. In his reminiscences of colonial service, Timothy Mayhew, whose first posting on arrival in Tanganyika in 1947 was as a DO in the Dar es Salaam office, recalled weekly raids in which

unarmed Tax clerks and DC's messengers, sometimes assisted by unarmed police, would cordon off a section of high density housing before day-break... Those with no fixed abode in the town were given government railway warrants to the stations nearest their homes and put on the train.<sup>10</sup>

A year after the 1947 strike, the Superintendent of Police reassured members of the Township Authority that 'the problem of unemployed Africans was borne constantly in mind' by police officers in the town and periodical round-ups of undesirables were being carried out as and when it was felt necessary.<sup>11</sup> This is borne out by surviving statistics from 1949. 385 removal orders under Cap.104 were made in Eastern Province that year, the vast majority of which would have been from Dar es Salaam.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> *TS*, 9<sup>th</sup> February 1950.

<sup>10</sup> Mayhew, 'Reminiscences', p.18.

<sup>11</sup> SP, reported at a Dsm TA meeting, 23<sup>rd</sup> January 1948, TNA/540/27/3.

<sup>12</sup> The only other town in Eastern Province where Cap.104 applied was Morogoro, from where in 1951 just one repatriation was made. EP response to Memo from MLG, 12<sup>th</sup> May 1952, TNA/21616/Vol.III.

*Table 9.1 Repatriation of undesirable persons, Dar es Salaam 1938-1958*

1938	32
1939	15
1940	35
1947	904 (March-December)
1949	385 (Eastern Province)
1950	425 ( -do- )
1951	234 ( -do- )
1954	1,094 1,230*
1955	551 (January-September) 1,027*
1956	638*
1957	2,335*
1958	2,034

\*Includes prisoners immediately repatriated on release from Ukonga.

Source: 1938-1940 from PC Baker to CS, 12.3.41, TNA 61/688/5; 1947 from Uzaramo DAR for 1947, p.16, TNA 540/1/4/B; 1949-51 from info in TNA 21616 Vol.III; 1954, 1955 & 1958 from Qrtly Police Reports in TNA 90/1011 Vol.I; territorial figures 1954-57 from 1957 PAR.

## Repatriation campaigns in the 1950s

In the closing years of colonial rule, this trend towards the more frequent and indiscriminate use of repatriation legislation actually accelerated. By the late-1950s use of Cap.104 had become the principal means of controlling the rapidly expanding urban African population, and as many as 2,000 individuals were being removed from the town annually. Meanwhile *wahuni* (or spiv) raids, as they came to be known by the police in the course of the decade, also played a major role in restricting illegal informal sector activities, apprehending tax defaulters, and more generally in the fight against crime.

The first evidence of a more concerted drive against urban undesirables in the 1950s is, predictably, connected with the strike in February 1950. The violent outcome of this dispute resulted in heightened anxiety -on the part of both officials and Indian, European and even African residents of the town alike- about the presence of large numbers of jobless Africans in the town. The strike took place in early February. By the end of the month reprisals had begun to be extracted. A police 'drive', the *Tanganyika Standard* reported, was on against 'spivs and drones, known undesirables, and others of dubious value to the town.'<sup>13</sup> Raids took place in the last week of February and in early March. By the third week of March a 'very mixed bag' were reported to have been apprehended, including some old offenders.<sup>14</sup> The drive was announced to be continuing and 'to avoid inconvenience' employers were asked to supply their employees with a letter to establish them as 'respectable citizens'. In a further raid three weeks later, 60 African 'loiterers' were reported to have been apprehended along the beach one Sunday afternoon.<sup>15</sup> Over the year as a whole 425 removal orders were made in Eastern Province.<sup>16</sup>

Intermittent raids continued to occur in the early-1950s. The following June, a morning sweep of Dar es Salaam and its outskirts was reported to have resulted in the arrest of 40 Africans 'who could not give a reasonable explanation of what they were doing at the time.'<sup>17</sup> 'Some of the Africans who were picked up', it was reported, 'were

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<sup>13</sup> TS, 18<sup>th</sup> March 1950, p.21.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p.19.

<sup>15</sup> TS, 8<sup>th</sup> April 1950, p.23.

<sup>16</sup> EP response to Memo from MLG, 12<sup>th</sup> May 1952, TNA/21616/Vol.III.

<sup>17</sup> TS, 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1951, p.17.



sleeping on the beach and in the cemetery in Upanga Road.' Nineteen arrests had also been made the previous week in operations against gamblers, and most of these had been expelled from the town. The total number of removal orders made in Eastern Province in 1951 was 234, about half the amount made the previous (strike) year.<sup>18</sup> In the first six months of 1952, 90 Africans were repatriated.<sup>19</sup> It was later the same year, however, when the scale of repatriation campaigns escalated dramatically. On 7th November that year, in the largest operation of the kind conducted up to then, 676 African 'spivs' and tax-evaders were apprehended in raids on Wireless Village and other areas of the town.<sup>20</sup> Whilst only thirty four of those apprehended were immediately repatriated, this is a significant amount to result from a single days' raids. After this *wahuni*/tax defaulter campaigns became a recurring feature of African urban life. A police report for the third quarter of 1953 records that 'a number of 'spiv' raids' were carried out between July and September.<sup>21</sup> In the next quarter, six raids 'to round up undesirables' along with 'normal routine checks of undesirables in the centre of town by beat-duty constables' were reported to have resulted in the removal of 68 persons 'who were found to have nothing better to do than to hang about the centre of Dar es Salaam looking for what they could pick up.'<sup>22</sup>

By 1954 -along with 1955 the only year from which detailed records survive- these campaigns were in full swing. According to a police report for the first quarter of the year:

Special attention has been given to the 'spiv' population of Dar es Salaam and the increased number of undesirables who, having come to Dar es Salaam in search of employment, and been unsuccessful, turn to crime.<sup>23</sup>

Nine raids conducted in the first quarter of 1954 netted 298 defaulters from a total 575 persons checked. Meanwhile, 127 were repatriated to their homes. The Assistant Superintendent of Police was encouraged, and assured central government that 'the 'clean up' of Dar es Salaam will continue and, I feel, show practical results.'<sup>24</sup> In the following quarter action was intensified. 737 persons were checked, of whom 191 were found to be

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<sup>18</sup> EP response to Memo from MLG, 12<sup>th</sup> May 1952, TNA/21616/Vol.III.

<sup>19</sup> CP to CS, 14<sup>th</sup> August 1952, TNA/21963/Vol.II.

<sup>20</sup> TS, 8<sup>th</sup> November 1952, p.8.

<sup>21</sup> QPR, Dsm Dist., 1<sup>st</sup> July-30<sup>th</sup> September 1953, TNA/90/1011/Vol.1.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 1<sup>st</sup> October-31<sup>st</sup> December 1953.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 1<sup>st</sup> January-31<sup>st</sup> March 1954.

in default of tax and 268 were repatriated. A total of twenty two raids were conducted: thirteen in April, eight in May, and just one in June. Towards the end of the quarter raids were stopped, in part because the District Office had used up all its repatriation funds.<sup>25</sup> However, further resources were soon pledged for this purpose,<sup>26</sup> and whilst in the next quarter fewer raids were conducted, more than three times the amount of people were screened; 2,307, of whom 539 were defaulters and 400 were served with removal orders.<sup>27</sup> Action reached a peak in August during which 216 Africans were repatriated. In just four days -4<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> August- 93 'undesirables' were served with removal orders.<sup>28</sup> In the final quarter of 1954 almost as many raids were conducted as had been carried out in the first nine months of the year -taking place almost every other day- although the amount of persons screened actually declined slightly. In the course of 44 raids in October-December, 1,859 persons were checked, of whom 546 were in default of taxes and 299 were repatriated, bringing the annual total of repatriated 'undesirables' to 1,094.<sup>29</sup> The provincial annual report recorded an even higher total of 1,230 removal orders from Dar es Salaam in 1954. The discrepancy can perhaps be accounted for by the immediate repatriation of Ukonga detainees on their release from prison.<sup>30</sup>

The momentum was maintained in the first half of 1955. 'The rounding-up of 'spivs' throughout the district,' observed the Assistant Superintendent of Police, 'continued unabated, with gratifying results.'<sup>31</sup> As a result of 31 raids conducted in January-March a massive 3,104 persons were checked, leading to the detection of 787 defaulters and the repatriation of 249 'undesirables'. By the second quarter, however, things had quietened down somewhat. Whilst the frequency of the raids was not significantly diminished (25), and a substantial number of individuals were checked (1,467), just 259 were found to be in default of tax and only 89 were served with removal orders.<sup>32</sup> Perhaps this is an indication that, after a year of vigorous action against the surplus population, 'undesirables' were getting thinner on the ground. If this is the case, however, the respite

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 1<sup>st</sup> April-30<sup>th</sup> June 1954.

<sup>26</sup> CS to CP, 16<sup>th</sup> July 1954, TNA/34184

<sup>27</sup> PAR for 1954, p.12.

<sup>28</sup> Removal orders in TNA/540/55/10/1

<sup>29</sup> PAR for 1954, p.12.

<sup>30</sup> A later report (1<sup>st</sup> April-30<sup>th</sup> June 1955) records the repatriation of 29 released prisoners separately from those apprehended in raids.

<sup>31</sup> QPR, Dsm Dist., 1<sup>st</sup> January-31<sup>st</sup> March 1955, TNA/90/1011/Vol.1.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 1<sup>st</sup> March-30<sup>th</sup> June 1955.

was brief. In the third quarter, 213 persons were repatriated<sup>33</sup> and by the end of the year the annual total had risen to 1,024.<sup>34</sup> Meanwhile, as many as 7,009 individuals -10 per cent of the urban African population- had been screened at some point in the year.<sup>35</sup> With as many as 3,000 migrants arriving in the town annually, it was unlikely that any scarcity of 'undesirables' would ever last for long. Nevertheless, in 1956 action under the ordinance appears to have eased slightly, with a significantly smaller total of 638 being repatriated.

Once again, the respite was a brief. In his report for 1957, the Provincial Commissioner observed that '[u]nemployment and law and order problems demanded an increase in the attention paid to repatriation and expulsion of undesirables.'<sup>36</sup> The scale and frequency of *wahuni* raids were intensified yet further, becoming, by 1958 at least, a daily occurrence.<sup>37</sup> In both 1957 and 1958 over 2,000 people were repatriated from Dar es Salaam; 842 in one quarter alone.<sup>38</sup> Comprehensive records for 1959 have not survived, although early in the year the screening of over 1,000 men during a raid at Keko Juu is reported by the *Tanganyika Standard*.<sup>39</sup> The previous week the same paper had reported that 138 were screened at Kipawa village (38 being detained for tax offences), and that another raid at Kinondoni police netted 95 defaulters.<sup>40</sup> In fact, the largest operation to take place in the colonial period also occurred around this time. After rioting had resulted in the death of an African policeman at Buguruni, 2,817 Africans were screened in a clampdown designed to catch the killer/s. A side effect was the detection of 959 persons in default of tax for the previous year, and, no doubt, a number of repatriations also occurred as a result of the raid.<sup>41</sup> The violence in Buguruni was associated with rumours about the disappearance of Africans in which *mumiani* superstitions were connected to the colonial administration.<sup>42</sup> Brennan has rightly observed that in the context of the late-1950s 'the idea that government officials were

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 1<sup>st</sup> June-30<sup>th</sup> September 1955.

<sup>34</sup> PAR for 1955 – or 1957, p.30???

<sup>35</sup> QPR, Dsm Dist., 1<sup>st</sup> October-31<sup>st</sup> December 1955, TNA/90/1011/Vol.1.

<sup>36</sup> EPAR for 1957, p.30.

<sup>37</sup> See QPRs for 1958 in TNA/90/1011/Vol.1.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 1<sup>st</sup> January-31<sup>st</sup> March 1958.

<sup>39</sup> TS, 5<sup>th</sup> March 1959, p.1.

<sup>40</sup> TS, 27<sup>th</sup> February 1959, p.1.

<sup>41</sup> TS, 19<sup>th</sup> March 1959, p.5.

<sup>42</sup> Brennan, "Mumiani", p.1.

responsible for the disappearance of Africans from urban areas is not at all far-fetched.<sup>43</sup> Indeed, when over 2 per cent of the African population of the town were being forcibly removed by the administration annually,<sup>44</sup> attributing the disappearance of individual Africans to government action probably made powerful sense to those missing friends or relatives.

This was especially true when, as the decade progressed, increasingly arbitrary use was made of the repatriation legislation. More than ever before, by the mid-1950s to be unemployed in Dar es Salaam was in itself enough to be categorised as 'undesirable', and hence subject to repatriation. Reviewing action taken in the course of 1954, a police spokesman told the *Tanganyika Standard* that:

[C]hecks carried out during the year after 9 a.m. when presumably all law-abiding Africans were at work, tended to indicate that there were too many undesirables and Africans of the casual labourer class for whom there was no work... They were the people who were being repatriated.<sup>45</sup>

DC Harris concurred, singling out "'drifters' unqualified to do anything but labouring work' as legitimate targets for removal, as 'the completion or near-completion of several post-war capital works meant that that there was no employment for them.'<sup>46</sup> Looking back in his memoirs, the same official describes his role in the intensification of action under Cap.104 (after his domestic staff had been subject to strike-related intimidation):

Little could be done to counter such potentially dangerous behaviour unless actual breaches of the law took place, but it seemed to me that a certain 'showing of the flag' might be useful, especially in improving the morale of the bulk of African citizens. I therefore increased the already regular attempts to keep out of town those young, unemployed and often tax-defaulting elements... There existed on the statute book an Ordinance making provision for the expulsion of undesirables... This Ordinance had been used for some time to repatriate persons convicted in the local courts, and, with the cooperation of the police, I saw no reason why its use should not be extended to repatriate those who, whether through their own fault or not, 'toiled not neither did they spin' and could therefore not even make a contribution through their tax to the management of Dar es Salaam.<sup>47</sup>

As we have seen, unemployed Africans had actually been targeted for some time under Cap.104, however, it was during Harris' tenure as DC that a substantial

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p.12.

<sup>44</sup> Based on annual totals for the two previous years, 1957/58.

<sup>45</sup> TS, 28<sup>th</sup> December 1954.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid. Many of these 'drifters' had presumably been welcome urban residents for as long as their labour was required.

<sup>47</sup> Harris, *Donkey's Gratitude*, p.298.

intensification took place leading to increasingly blameless individuals being defined as undesirable. As a result the tiny office of his assistant, John Cairns, was, he recalls, constantly filled with 'wahuni awaiting repatriation or the helpless and hopeless Tax Defaulters.' Later on Harris appears to recognise the injustice of repatriations, but concludes that public order imperatives necessitated such action being taken:

Hard and sometimes unsympathetic –unfair even- this culling of the *wahuni* might have seemed. In reality they were often the young pioneers of the African population, leaving home in their dissatisfaction with the futureless subsistence agricultural economy of the rural areas. However, the African residents of Dar es Salaam genuinely felt that law and order, as well as internal security, could only be ensured by controlling the numbers of *wahuni* present in the town to indulge in petty theft and similar offences against property and person. It was, after all, the young *wahuni* from whom was most easily recruited the rabble which formed the crowd on the scene of any street incident or traffic accident.<sup>48</sup>

Harris is unjustified in claiming African support for the repatriation campaigns. A large proportion of Africans in Dar es Salaam would have been close to those sections of the population vulnerable to repatriation, through kin or social bonds, or simply because they were in danger of becoming jobless themselves. The vast majority of African townsmen, as Leslie points out, were poor, and they resented those 'in authority, fixing the low wages, opposing the strikes, arresting those who steal, harassing those who do not pay their tax, repatriating those who cannot give a good account of themselves.'<sup>49</sup> Meanwhile, whilst there is evidence of elite anxiety about the presence of unoccupied Africans in the town, educated Africans were not inclined to view repatriation as a solution to the problems of over-urbanisation. This could be for political reasons. African nationalist leaders could not afford to alienate the urban population by supporting such action, and anyway found Harris' so-called 'rabble' a useful presence at political rallies (at least up to independence).<sup>50</sup> It could be for practical reasons. Lawi Kardi, in a letter to the *Tanganyika Standard* in 1957, acknowledged the need for something to be done to reduce the surplus population (and hence crime). He ruled out repatriation, however, as being ineffective. '[Y]ou say that Police should round them [*wahuni*] up and send them to their villages, such assumption is without foundation for the reason that they all come back within a few days.' 'Hundreds of them who were sent home', he observed, 'are in Dar es Salaam and the outskirts of Dar es Salaam.'<sup>51</sup> Kardi's preferred solution was for

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p.341.

<sup>49</sup> Leslie, *Survey*, p.106.

<sup>50</sup> Although once in power their minds would quickly change on this issue.

<sup>51</sup> *TS*, 18<sup>th</sup> June 1957, p.4.

the Department of Agriculture to find them employment in the rural areas, as African politicians were in fact to attempt to do after the assumption of responsible government. Meanwhile the Convention of Representative Chiefs, held in January the following year, counselled for similar action:

The Conference distinguished between children and youths under twenty, who should be subject to repatriation to their homes as at present: criminals who should be dealt with as criminals; and unemployed loafers. To teach these last the habit of discipline, it requested Government to consider the introduction of some form of compulsory labour service, which, to avoid criticism from outside Tanganyika, it would be necessary to relate closely to the needs of Native Authorities in respect of the work to be undertaken.<sup>52</sup>

In carefully breaking down those groups currently subject to repatriation for differentiated treatment, the Conference acknowledged the same dangers of indiscriminate application of the removal of undesirables legislation that Justice McRoberts had seventeen years earlier. Dangers which, for colonial officials, it was convenient to ignore.

The discrepancy between Harris' belief to be acting on behalf of 'respectable' urban citizens and Africans' attitudes towards repatriation campaigns -which actually represented a massive intrusion into the everyday life of the African community as a whole-<sup>53</sup> are perhaps best illustrated by the general response to a radio broadcast he made in the wake of some raids in the mid-1950s.<sup>54</sup> In an ill-judged attempt to inject some humour into the subject, Harris reported that:

we had been fishing at Msasani early that morning, and went on to say that perhaps some of my listeners had seen the police lorries full of fish being taken to the Ukonga prison to be dried.<sup>55</sup>

The audience response was -as far as Harris was concerned- unexpectedly negative. 'It was not long', he wrote, 'before I learned that some Africans were deeply hurt at being referred to as fish 'when they were just humans like everyone else'. For Harris, this illustrated 'the extent to which nationalist, anti-government propaganda had so charged the atmosphere with emotions as to impair the customary quick and reliable sense of

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<sup>52</sup> Mins. of Convention of Representative Chiefs of Tanganyika, 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> January 1958, TNA/225/80070.

<sup>53</sup> No African was spared the humiliation of screening.

<sup>54</sup> Harris tells us his 'predecessor had very cleverly encouraged the Broadcasting Corporation Sauti ya Dar es Salaam into inviting him to give a short talk occasionally on affairs in the town, and this had become a useful calming and morale-boosting occasion, much appreciated by the householders and more stable, respectable and conservative citizens.' Harris, *Donkey's Gratitude*, p.298.

humour....'<sup>56</sup> Whilst anti-colonialism may well have played a part in the articulation of such grievances, perhaps a more plausible interpretation of the African response to defaulters and 'undesirables' being described as fish was simply that it was too close to the bone. When a community is treated inhumanely it is not surprising if it bristles when members of that community are singled out for flippant dehumanisation by persons in authority.

### **De-spivving Dar**

Substantial resources were devoted to campaigns against undesirables in 1950s Dar es Salaam. Occasionally action was taken by the police unilaterally; as occurred early one Saturday morning in June 1951 when a sweep by 60 plain clothes policemen and 4 mobile patrols took place. The plain clothes men, it was reported, had concentrated on the town area whilst the mobile patrols 'swept the outskirts of the town.'<sup>57</sup> Their efforts led to 40 Africans being apprehended. More commonly, however, representatives from several different bodies participated in increasingly systematic raids. In the first major raid of this type for which details survive, in November 1952, the *Standard* reported the use of '[a] force consisting of 40 police, 40 tax-collectors and 6 vehicles' along with the police bicycle squad.<sup>58</sup> These 'District Teams' included representatives from the native administration to check on such details as the employment status and place of residence of persons screened. 'The local *Jumbes* and *Wazee*', it was observed in 1954, 'rendered valuable assistance in assuring that respectable citizens were released from the 'net' with minimum delay.'<sup>59</sup> Someone from the district office was also expected to be present 'to keep an eye on things' – one of the DOs or even the DC himself.<sup>60</sup> Occasionally, officials from Kisarawe and other districts in Eastern Province also participated in the raids. Though priorities differed according to district. According to Leslie:

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p.299.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., p.299.

<sup>57</sup> *TS*, 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1951, p.17.

<sup>58</sup> *TS*, 8<sup>th</sup> November 1952, p.8.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Leslie interview.

The primary function of the raids was, as far as officials in surrounding districts were concerned, to collect tax. To the Dar es Salaam officials it was to reduce the number of people who were floating around.<sup>61</sup>

Tax collectors would, of course, have been an integral part of any '*wahuni*' team, checking up on tax receipts –*cheti ya kodi*– for recent years. They were usually Africans; native administration employees such as messengers from the district office.<sup>62</sup> Finally, there were the police themselves, who were responsible for the arrest of potential undesirables, and their eventual removal to prison to await prosecution and repatriation. The police Motorised Company usually played an important role. Being used 'in force' in 10 out of 19 raids carried out between July and September, 1954, for example, and 24 out of 31 in the first three months of 1955.<sup>63</sup> The four patrol vans with radios installed were used to cover the Municipality, which by this time stretched to 36 square miles.<sup>64</sup> The task of the other cars, meanwhile, was 'to cordon off an area whilst the District Team sorted out the 'sheep from the goats'.<sup>65</sup> Alongside the Motorised Company there were up to 50 or 60 African constables under two or three (European) commanding officers.<sup>66</sup> Special Constables were also sometimes used in the raids. ASP Young mentions the assistance of one –appropriately named– Mr. Eager who took part in a morning raid at Chang'ombe in August 1954.<sup>67</sup> A police report for Coastal District the following year notes the use, in 'a full scale operation carried out against previously selected targets in the Urban Division', of 'a large number of Special Constables... as telephone operators, R/T operators, drivers, control room operators and with executive Police Officers on the ground.' The operation was conducted partly 'to instruct... Special Constables in rounding up and screening undesirables.'<sup>68</sup> In 1955 these District Teams were augmented by a special police squad composed of 'the more energetic constables, under an intelligent probationary corporal,' which 'was given the task of apprehending loiterers, unlicensed hawkers and the 'crafty' type of 'spiv', who is generally too cunning to be caught in a normal raid.'<sup>69</sup> In their first two weeks operating in central Dar es Salaam they apprehended 74 undesirables, of whom 34 were defaulters, and 36 were repatriated.

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> See QPRs, Dsm Dist., TNA/90/1011/Vol.1.

<sup>64</sup> TS, 14<sup>th</sup> August 1954, p.5.

<sup>65</sup> QPR, Dsm Dist., 1<sup>st</sup> June-30<sup>th</sup> September 1954, TNA/90/1011/Vol.1.

<sup>66</sup> ASP Young's Personal Duty Diary, 10<sup>th</sup> February & 5<sup>th</sup> August 1954, RH/Mss.Afr.s.2293.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> QPR, Dsm Dist., 1<sup>st</sup> October-31<sup>st</sup> December 1955, TNA/90/1011/Vol.1.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 1<sup>st</sup> January-31<sup>st</sup> March 1955.



The location and timing of *wahuni* raids varied considerably. In June 1951 a sweep of the town was conducted in the early hours of the morning.<sup>70</sup> Seven years later, in 1958, small raids were said to have taken place in the Ring Street area in the evening.<sup>71</sup> More commonly, though, raids would begin in the early daylight hours and continue throughout the morning. 'When', according to Harris, 'employed persons had either gone to work or were going to it.'<sup>72</sup> ASP Young's notebook entries for the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> February, 1954, may be taken as typical in this regard:

**10.2.54**

1350 hrs around Temeke 'H' setting up tomorrow's raid with Paul Roberts and Weston of Mot[or] Co[mpan]y

**11.2.54**

0730 hrs to St[atio]n - getting *wahuni* raid under weigh [sic]

0800 Kilwa Rd Division men on way to muster at Changombe

...0825 to PTS to pick up Mot Coy with 2 pickups

...0845 drive to raid

0900 Arrive spot on: cordon round rapidly: only one man made break - nabbed: raiders[?] through looking for *wahuni*, stolen prop etc.

1100 Poor haul - only 18, include 2 bad boys, 3 bags cement and 5 yds KD

1130 Mot Coy Kilwa Rd Division returned.<sup>73</sup>

Raids such as the above occurred throughout the town; in Zones I and II as well as the main African areas. Records survive of action taken in Oyster Bay, Upanga and Uhindini, in addition to the more obvious locations such as Buguruni, Temeke, Msasani, Keko and Kigogo. Even communities on the Kigamboni peninsula, separated from the town by the Kurasini Channel, did not escape the occasional raid.<sup>74</sup>

The police would usually choose to be located at a bridge or some other form of bottleneck in order to facilitate screening.<sup>75</sup> At other times, though, house-to-house searches were conducted. Harris recalls that he used to accompany the raids

to provide them with magisterial cover (as a sort of human, walking search warrant if any householder protested at the invasion of his privacy in our search for undesirable lodgers)...<sup>76</sup>

<sup>70</sup> TS, 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1951, p.17.

<sup>71</sup> QPR, Dsm Dist., 1<sup>st</sup> April-30<sup>th</sup> June 1958, TNA/90/1011/Vol.1.

<sup>72</sup> Harris, *Donkey's Gratitude*, p.298.

<sup>73</sup> ASP Young's Personal Duty Diary, RH/Mss.Afr.s.2293.

<sup>74</sup> QPR, Dsm Dist., 1<sup>st</sup> October-31<sup>st</sup> December 1955.

<sup>75</sup> Leslie interview.

<sup>76</sup> Harris, *Donkey's Gratitude*, p.298; see also TS, 14<sup>th</sup> August 1954, p.5.

Anyone apprehended in the course of a raid would have their tax receipts checked. Those without proof of having paid tax for the current year or either of the two preceding ones were taken to the tax office (in the *boma*), where they would have the opportunity of having their receipts brought from their homes, or be prosecuted for failure to pay. Ex-offenders and those caught in breach of the law –unlicensed traders, returned repatriates, beggars etc.- were taken to the police station to be charged. Raids were highly effective. After one such raid conducted in the early 1940s, inconvenienced Europeans complained that ‘only those Africans who were exceptionally meticulous or successfully cunning were able to comfort their employers with their customary early morning tea.’<sup>77</sup>

On arrival at the tax office, defaulters were questioned, in order to sift out ‘undesirables’. One such scene is described by J.C. Cairns, who served as a District Officer in Dar es Salaam in the mid-1950s under DC Harris, in his lightweight –and to the post-colonial reader often supercilious- account of colonial service in Tanganyika. It is worth quoting from at length. The scene is set with a preliminary invective against the urban ‘undesirable’:

In the tax office a defaulter is being questioned by one of the clerks. The defaulter is about thirty. He wears a black and white check shirt, green trousers, torn tweed jacket and bare feet. He is one of the problems of urban Africa, one of the new parasitic class: the spiv who lives by his wits without work. But he does not think of himself like this. The city has given him freedom, which he wants. He lives here without restriction. He can come and go as he pleases, vanish, change his name a dozen times, have different women nightly. Best of all, he can live on others, for in the elaborate family and tribal communities there is always someone to help him. There is always a cousin or uncle or tribal brother who will give a place to sleep or a little food from the family pot. His only responsibility is to pay tax, and that is no responsibility unless he is caught. When this happens, of course it is bad luck. Still, sometimes even this can be bluffed out.

‘You,’ the clerk asks. ‘What is your name?’

‘Me?’

‘You.’

‘Shomari Rajabu.’

‘Where is your home?’

‘Here. I am from Dar es Salaam.’

‘You were born here?’

‘Born? Not born here, *bwana*.’

‘Ehehh. Where were you born?’

‘Up-country, *bwana*. Mwanza.’<sup>78</sup>

‘Where is your father?’

‘My true father?’

<sup>77</sup> TS, 10<sup>th</sup> October 1941, p.6.

<sup>78</sup> Note Cairns gives a coastal name to an individual from Mwanza.

'Yes,' the clerk says angrily. 'Your true father.'  
 'He is not here. He is up-country. Mwanza.'  
 'And your mother?'  
 'Mwanza.'  
 'Hehhh! When did you come to Dar es Salaam?'  
 'Me, *bwana*?' A look of surprise.  
 'Yes, you.'  
 A long silence. This is the time to lie. Still, what sort of lie?  
 Finally, 'Last year, *bwana*. Year 1954 I came to Dar es Salaam.'  
 'So you are not from Dar es Salaam?'  
 'Not really, *bwana*.'  
 'What work do you do?'  
 Astonishment. Then injured innocence. Then an inspired triumphant smile.  
 'I have good work, *bwana*.'  
 'What is it?'  
 'In the docks.'  
 'Yesterday you worked?'  
 A pause.  
 'Not yesterday.'  
 The clerk is sarcastic now. 'The day before?'  
 'No, *bwana*.'  
 'Last week?'  
 A long silence. Finally, 'No. Not last week.'  
 'But you do work as a docker?'  
 'Oh yes, *bwana*. *Ndio*. *Ndio*. But not now.'  
 'Not now?' the clerk asks.  
 'No, *bwana*. I left that work a long time ago.'  
 'When was that?'  
 'You said you didn't come to Dar es Salaam until 1954.'  
 'Yes.' A silence. The clerk, who is becoming increasingly angry, stares at the man.  
 'That was the second time. Year 1953 was the first time.'  
 'I see.' The clerk realizes he is facing what he faces continually; a mixture of lies, deceit, exaggeration and bad memory.  
 'What work do you do now?'  
 'I have no work now, *bwana*. Not since year 1953. Nobody will give me work. Nobody will help me.'  
 The clerk groans, for now it is falling into a pattern. 'You have done no work for two years? Where did you get your food? Your shirt? Your coat?'  
 No answer. The man stands sullenly, scuffing his bare foot on the floor.  
 'Have you paid your taxes?'  
 'I always pay taxes, *bwana*. How could I not pay taxes to the government? Yes, I have paid. Year 1947, year 1948, year 1949.'  
 'Those are old years,' the clerk shouts. 'The government does not care about them. Now it is 1955. Have you paid for 1955?'  
 'Not 1955. I am late, *bwana*.'  
 'And 1954?'  
 'Not yet. I wanted to pay, but I forgot.'  
 'You forgot!' the clerk says savagely. 'And 1953?'  
 'Oh yes, *bwana*. I paid in 1953.'  
 'Where is your tax ticket?'  
 The man looks at the clerk blankly, and then inspiration comes, and he says triumphantly,  
 'I paid the money, but he didn't give me a ticket.'  
 'Who?'

'My headman, *bwana*. Yes, I paid him, but he has eaten the money I gave him in 1953. He was a thief, and that is why I did not pay this year, *bwana*. Why should a man pay if he is not given a ticket?'

...The clerk says, 'You will have to see the District Officer.'

'But I will pay my tax. I will pay at the end of next month.'

'The *Bwana Shauri* [DO] must hear about this.' The man is brought to me where I am waiting at the next table. A messenger stands beside him lest he run away. The man looks around sullenly. The *Bwana Shauri*, he sees, will have a heart of stone.<sup>79</sup>

The fate of such an individual was almost inevitably repatriation. In August 1952, a reporter from the *Tanganyika Standard* observed '[o]utside the *Boma* in Dar es Salaam... a disconsolate row of Africans, roped together within a few yards of the tax collection office... await[ing] removal for failure to pay tax.'<sup>80</sup> Such individuals were sent on remand to Ukonga Prison, pending the application of a removal order. Space in the prison was limited, there being accommodation for not many more than 90 detainees on remand. This meant that at times *wahuni* raids were stopped due to lack of space. 'The Prison's Officers have been most helpful', commented the Assistant Superintendent of Police at the time of one such crisis in 1955, 'but one cannot 'get a quart into a pint mug'.<sup>81</sup>

Once the removal order had been served –usually within a few days- the victim was repatriated to his home district. This was not always the end of the story, however. Occasionally, repatriatees were returned to districts which were found after arrival not to be their real districts of origin. In 1955, the DC at Kigoma complained that large numbers of 'undesirable destitutes' were being despatched to him whose true homes lay elsewhere.<sup>82</sup> It is clear that some of those Africans who were removed from Dar es Salaam under Cap.104 were actually exploiting the eagerness of officials to reduce the urban population in order to obtain free transport to areas other than their home districts. 'I have seen', the DC Morogoro informed the Provincial Commissioner in 1950:

H.M. Government's help exploited so often in the case of *soi-disants* destitutes who wish to visit their friends up-country, say that they are natives of, say, Bukoba, and expect to be sent there straight away.<sup>83</sup>

In order to counter this phenomenon the Member for Local Government in 1955 required receiving DCs to be consulted in advance.<sup>84</sup> This was soon found to be impracticable,

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<sup>79</sup> Cairns, *Bush*, pp.122-125.

<sup>80</sup> *TS*, 23<sup>rd</sup> August 1952, p.5.

<sup>81</sup> QPR, Dsm Dist., 1<sup>st</sup> January-31<sup>st</sup> March 1955, TNA/90/1011/Vol.1.

<sup>82</sup> MLG to PC, EP, 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1956, TNA/540/3/1.

<sup>83</sup> DC, Morogoro to PC, EP, 6<sup>th</sup> April 1950, TNA/61/502/50.



Figure 1 'Spivs and self-government philosophers'  
Source: Cairns, *Bush and Boma*, p.133

however. 'Bearing in mind the dilatoriness of many Native Authorities', wrote DO Clark in 1956,

and their difficulties in having investigations made by idle Headmen and Elders, I suggest the delay between picking up the repatriatee or destitute and getting him away from Dar es Salaam is likely to be very considerable and costly if concurrence by the receiving district is to be received in advance.<sup>85</sup>

With scant financial resources and limited prison accommodation at Ukonga, the district administration in Dar es Salaam could simply not afford any delay.

The other, more common, problem associated with repatriatees on arrival in their districts of origin was a disinclination to stay there. Without close rural supervision—usually beyond the capacity of Native Authorities—many took the first opportunity that arose to return to Dar es Salaam. It was a problem that had troubled urban officials for some time. In 1947, for instance, the DC had complained that whilst it was 'not known how many [repatriatees] returned to the township... there have been a number of convictions for failing to comply with Removal Orders.'<sup>86</sup> Mayhew (urban DO in 1947) recalled the return of undesirables as a routine fact of life. Those repatriated by train simply 'got off at the first stop and walked back to Dar es Salaam.'<sup>87</sup> According to the Attorney General, writing in 1952, Cap.104 was 'not always the howling success it appears to be'. 'The reason is', he explained,

although it provides comparatively simple machinery for repatriating natives it breaks down because the natives against whom removal orders are made tend to return shortly after the making of the order using different names, with the result that in the absence of any system of regulation it is extremely difficult to identify them.<sup>88</sup>

The Commissioner of Police was of the same opinion. 'Due to the inadequate number of police,' he informed Hutt, 'it is comparatively easy for these people to re-enter the Municipality and become absorbed into the native population again.'<sup>89</sup> In an attempt to address this phenomenon, an Assistant Probation Officer was sent to Kisarawe district (where the largest number of the repatriatees were sent) in 1954 'to help with the problem of men and youths repatriated to their homes as a result of a removal order made by the

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<sup>84</sup> MLG to PC, EP, 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1956, TNA/540/3/1.

<sup>85</sup> Clark to PC, EP, 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1956, TNA/540/3/3/XIV.

<sup>86</sup> Uzaramo DAR for 1947, p.16, TNA/540/1/4/B.

<sup>87</sup> Mayhew, 'Reminiscences', p.18.

<sup>88</sup> Min., 31<sup>st</sup> March 1952, TNA/21616/Vol.III.

<sup>89</sup> CP to CS, 14<sup>th</sup> August 1952, TNA/21963/Vol.II.

DC, Dar es Salaam.' '[F]rom present indications', wrote the head of the Commissioner of Prisons at the end of the year, 'it appears that it will prove extremely useful in helping to settle these men in their homes and villages and preventing them from drifting back to town.'<sup>90</sup> By 1958, however, the service was reported to have become overburdened 'owing to the large numbers involved'.<sup>91</sup>

Statistics recording the number of returning repatriates are sparse indeed (and refer only to those who were apprehended by the authorities), however, they do give some indication of the problem. For example, many of the 307 'offenders' picked up in 1954 were said to be persons returning to the town after having been repatriated.<sup>92</sup> In a single raid on Chang'ombe in August that year, 7 out of the 204 people screened were found to be in contravention of previous removal orders.<sup>93</sup> Three years later, in the first ten months of 1957, 101 returned repatriates were prosecuted in the Resident Magistrate's court. Meanwhile, in raids carried out in April-June 1958 at Ring Street and Buguruni, 52 of the 331 persons checked had returned to Dar es Salaam 'although subject to repatriation orders'.<sup>94</sup> There were presumably countless others who did the same and escaped undetected.<sup>95</sup> The attraction of the capital was clearly, in many cases, sufficient to overcome the inconvenience of repatriation. Meanwhile, the removal of an ever increasing number of urban 'undesirables' was leading to a proportionate increase in repatriates returning illegally to their favoured place of residence in the African areas of Dar es Salaam.

### Some 'Undesirables'

Little impression has been gained so far of the identity of the subjects of repatriation; their district of origin; their age; their length of residence in the town. Colonial administrators tended not to prioritise the recording of such information; crude statistics usually served their purposes. Whilst scant information about those subjected to repatriation has survived for the bulk of the colonial period, however, the contents of a

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<sup>90</sup> Prisons AR for 1954, p.34.

<sup>91</sup> Social Devt. Dept. AR for 1958, p.27.

<sup>92</sup> PAR for 1954, p.12.

<sup>93</sup> ASP Young's Personal Duty Diary, 5<sup>th</sup> August 1954, RH/Mss.Afr.s.2293.

<sup>94</sup> QPR, Dsm Dist., 1<sup>st</sup> April-30<sup>th</sup> June 1958, TNA/90/1011/Vol.1.

number of files from the mid-1950s does provide us with more substantial background on a limited number of 'undesirables'.<sup>96</sup> A random sample from 1954 indicates, as might be expected, that the majority of repatriations occurred to districts in Eastern Province. Out of a total of 70 removal orders from August 1954, 39 were to Eastern Province, the majority (18) being to villages in neighbouring Kisarawe district. Amongst the other repatriatees there were a handful from districts scattered throughout the territory, from Newala in the south to Musoma in the north. In addition, six of them originated from neighbouring territories. The impression that the majority of repatriations were of Africans originating in Eastern Province is confirmed by a tribal breakdown of removal orders from three months later in November 1954. Over 60 per cent were against members of ethnic groups whose main district/s of origin lay within Eastern Province. As in August the majority –Zaramo, Nyagatwa and Ndengereko- were from neighbouring Kisarawe. The main districts of origin for those outside of Eastern Province were once again scattered throughout Tanganyika; the largest groups being the total of 12 Sukuma/Nyamwezi repatriated, which reflected their combined status as the largest ethnic group in Dar es Salaam after those originating in Eastern Province.

The kind of offences which formed the basis for applications for removal were varied. Stealing or other property offences were, of course, common. The reasons for removal, though, were in many cases petty indeed. One man was repatriated for sleeping under a tree at night; another for walking the streets without a light. A removal order was made on the basis that one 'boy' had 'got no job and has been harassing school girls on the way.' Unlicensed petty traders were vulnerable to repatriation. As were fare-dodgers on the trains. 'Wilful neglect to pay poll tax' was, of course, a repatriating offence, as was affray. Most common of all, however, was the simple fact that the accused was an 'undesirable person'. This could no doubt cover a multitude of sins, but official inability to come up with a specific offence indicates that it is perhaps best translated as joblessness. Unemployment was, above all else, undesirable.<sup>97</sup>

Some of the repatriatees actually took advantage of Cap.104. As we have seen, it was not unknown for individuals to exploit official keenness to apply the legislation against

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> TNA Acc. Nos. 540/54, 540/55, and 540/56.

<sup>97</sup> Information taken from removal orders in TNA Acc. Nos. 540/54, 540/55, and 540/56.



*Table 9.2 Districts receiving repatriates, August 1954*

Bagamoyo (EP)	1	Kilwa	2	Nyasaland	1
Kilosa (EP)	2	Lindi	2	Same	1
Kisarawe (EP)	18	Liwali	1	Singida	2
Morogoro (EP)	12	Mbeya	2	Tabora	6
Utete (EP)	6	Mombasa	1	Tanga	1
Dodoma	1	Musoma	1	Ufipa	2
Kahama	1	Mwanza	1	Uganda	2
Kakanga	1	Newala	3		

Source: Information in TNA 540/54/8/1.

*Table 9.3 Tribal breakdown of repatriates, November 1954*

Zaramo (Kisarawe)*	30	Sukuma	7	Mwera	2
Rufiji (Rufiji)	13	Nyamwezi	5	Ngoni	2
Ndengereko (Kisarawe/Rufiji)	10	Matumbi	4	Kinga	1
Luguru (Morogoro)	6	Gogo	3	Pangwa	1
Nyagatwa (Kisarawe)	4	Yao	3	Rangi	1
Kutu (Morogoro)	2	Hehe	2	Tende	1
Pogoro (Ulanga)	1	Luo	2	Tongwe	1
Ngindo (Ulanga/ + Kilwa/Nachingwea, SP)	5	Makonde	2	Zigua	1
	71		28		10

\* Indicates main district/s of origin in Eastern Province (from J.P. Moffett (ed.), Handbook of Tanganyika, Dsm, 1958, pp.294-97)

Source: Information taken from TNA 540/54/11/1.

urban undesirables in order to obtain free transport to districts other than those from which they originated. Commoner still were temporary migrants from the rural areas who, having 'heard of the monthly hundreds who are repatriated, decide to rely on this for [their] return.'<sup>98</sup> One such was Salum bin Juma, who with no money and no relations in Dar es Salaam, made his way from Tabora to see the town.<sup>99</sup> He was repatriated in February 1956. Another group who commonly took advantage of Cap.104 were Africans who came from the rural areas to seek medical treatment at Dar es Salaam's hospitals, many of whom were repatriated after being treated.<sup>100</sup>

From the isolated examples which turn up in the official record it is possible to begin to sketch a clearer picture of this group. In a letter about the control of unemployed persons from 1942, for example, DC Pike wrote to Baker of a trio of demobilised soldiers who were prime candidates for removal.<sup>101</sup> Musa bin Saidi had lost a leg whilst on army service and was discharged at Dar es Salaam on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1942 with a final payment of Shs.344/65. Within a month, however, the money had been spent and he found himself destitute. 'He will not go home', complained Pike, 'but wants to stay in Dar es Salaam permanently.' Ibrahim bin Chande provided Pike with a second example of urban profligacy. He was discharged on 1<sup>st</sup> June 1942 with a substantial Shs.800/- owing to him. The DC was reluctant to pay the full amount, allowing him to take just Shs.300/-. To Pike's consternation, within three days Chande had spent the lot, and was back at the district office demanding the outstanding amount. To paternalistic officials, the exposure of such individuals as Ibrahim bin Chande to the urban environment was bad not only for the person concerned but also for the native administration, to whom they represented a potential future burden. The third individual singled out by Pike was Mohamed bin Saidi, a young man who was born and grew up in Mohoro, a village located to the south of the Rufiji delta. He was discharged in mid-1942 after working a year for the E.A.M.L.S. He too was 'determined to stay in Dar es Salaam', expecting Government to supply him with 'some work which he himself considers satisfactory.' 'Government' was inclined to view the matter differently!

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<sup>98</sup> Leslie, *Survey*, p.244.

<sup>99</sup> Removal Order, 18<sup>th</sup> February 1956, TNA/540/3/1.

<sup>100</sup> See TNA/540/3/1 for examples.

<sup>101</sup> DC, Dsm to PC, EP, 4<sup>th</sup> June 1942, TNA/540/27/13.

Whilst these individuals were likely victims of urban 'cleansing' -Pike wrote to recommend the introduction of a pass system to control such people- there is no evidence that the above-named were actually repatriated. To find some examples of actual repatriates we must go forward a decade. In November 1954, for instance, a removal order was served against one Zacharia Viteris. He was a Tende (Kuria) former prison warder who on his discharge from work -'sometime ago'- had been given a government warrant to return to his home. The lure of the capital proved too strong, however. Returning to Ukonga prison lines he was initially driven away by the authorities there. A few nights later he was found once again wandering around the European officers' quarters at Ukonga. The same night a houseboy at Ukonga had reported having a box stolen. Whilst there was no evidence to connect Zacharia with the theft of the box, it was decided nevertheless that removal was the best option. 'Zacharia has no work in Dar es Salaam,' a police officer wrote. 'He has no real place to live in and has not even paid a single poll tax. Please get him repatriated.'<sup>102</sup> A few months later, in March 1955, Maria Salume was found to have made her way to the capital from Bukoba. 'This woman has come again to Dar es Salaam without any reason', complained the DC, somewhat illogically. People had good reasons for travelling to Dar es Salaam (especially from as far away as Bukoba), they were simply not acknowledged as such by pressurised officials. She was expelled under Cap.104.<sup>103</sup> Judging by the lack of further instances, this constitutes an isolated example of what must have been an extremely rare phenomenon: the removal of a female 'undesirable'.<sup>104</sup>

A number of probation reports on tax defaulters which have survived from early 1956 shed further chinks of light on the world of the repatriates. The information preserved reflects the priorities (and prejudices) of colonial officials, but for all its weaknesses it at least gives us some insight into those being categorised by officials as 'undesirable'.

Mikidandi Athumani was relatively old to be facing repatriation. He was 45 years old and from the village of Ndundu on the Rufiji river close to the district headquarters at Utete. According to his probation report, he had been in town for just four months,

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<sup>102</sup> Chang'ombe Police Station to Central Police Station, 10<sup>th</sup> November 1954, TNA/540/54/11/11.

<sup>103</sup> DC, Dsm to DC, Bukoba, 16<sup>th</sup> March 1955, TNA/540/3/1.

<sup>104</sup> The only other reference to the repatriation of women I have come across is in a 1936 letter from Erica Fiah in which he refers to: 'a few cases of women who were repatriated for a certain crime [prostitution?] to

staying rent free at the house of a 'tribal associate' in Tungi, before being arrested for being in default of taxes. He had just one female relation in the town; a niece. At the time of his arrest, Athumani was employed making *makuti* thatch for the roofing of African houses. In previous years he had travelled to the islands of Zanzibar to work on the plantations during the clove harvest. Enquiries were made into his character by the probation service. Hassani Mawazo, in whose home he had been staying at Tungi, confirmed official suspicions: Athumani had many debts outstanding in his home village and was no longer welcome in his house. 'A very doubtful character', the Senior Probation Officer, J.E. Silvertand, concluded: 'To be repatriated.'<sup>105</sup>

Mbegu Salehe came from Msonga in the south of Kisarawe district. When he was apprehended for defaulting in March 1956 he was 22 and unmarried. He moved frequently between Dar es Salaam, where he would work for short periods, and Msonga where he had a *shamba* that he cultivated. When in town he stayed with an uncle who lived in Pemba Street in Kariakoo. In February 1956, Salehe had been in the town just a few days before being picked up for being 'abroad at night without a light', for which he was sentenced to seven days imprisonment. After his release he was immediately prosecuted for failure to pay tax for 1955. He was in default of taxes for just one year, having paid for both 1953 and 1954. However, neither this nor the fact that he was simply taking advantage of the 'off-season' to leave his *shamba* –as he had done in previous years- in order to obtain some waged labour in the capital (as a result of which, perhaps, he could have settled his tax arrears) was enough to redeem him in the eyes of the probation officer. 'This man', Silvertand decided, 'should be sent back to Kisarawe where he can be supervised by the APO for that district.'<sup>106</sup>

Mrisho Omari was a 19 year old Kwere from Msoga in southwestern Bagamoyo district. He gave as his town address one in Temeke, but most of the fifteen months he had been in Dar es Salaam had been spent serving time inside Ukonga prison, where he had just completed a ten month sentence. He had also been convicted and imprisoned on two other occasions, although the nature of the offences is not recorded. It is most probable –judging by its length- that the latest ten month term was for some form of

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their countries but have privately returned to Dar es Salaam without your knowledge.' TAWCA to MS, 12<sup>th</sup> April 1936, TNA/22444.

<sup>105</sup> Court Report, 29<sup>th</sup> February 1956, TNA/540/56/1.

crime against property. Prior to his spell at Ukonga, Omari had been employed by an Indian at the rate of Shs50/- per month. He had also worked in Dar es Salaam as a labourer on building sites. Unsurprisingly, Silvertand considered him a bad risk. In the Probation Officer's assessment he was 'a very doubtful character who would be very difficult to supervise' and repatriation was considered 'the best thing for him.'<sup>107</sup>

Amiri Zauma, a 20 year old Makonde from Mikindani, had been living in Magomeni for five months prior to his prosecution in March 1956 for defaulting. Having reached Standard IV, he had completed a full course of primary education. On arrival in Dar es Salaam he first worked as a servant in an Indian household for a couple of months, and then went on to gain employment at the New Africa Hotel, where he was earning Shs.50/- per month. His only relative in town was an uncle in whose Magomeni house he stayed. In February 1956 Zauma was arrested for loitering and was sentenced to seven days imprisonment. On his release, after prosecution as a defaulter, he was considered unsuitable for probation and repatriated to Mikindani.<sup>108</sup>

Hamisi Asumani was a 25 year old Ndengereko from Kitomondo village, close to the coastal town of Kisiju in southern Kisarawe district. Prior to prosecution, he had been in Dar es Salaam for five months. He claimed to have many relatives in the town, one of whom, an uncle was providing him with free accommodation at his home in Nyamwezi Street, Kariakoo. He also claimed to be working at an Arab restaurant for the monthly wage of Shs25/- plus food. In his sixth month in town Asumani was arrested for loitering and given a one week sentence. He had one previous conviction from the previous year, when he had served two months for an unspecified offence. On his discharge Asumani was immediately re-arrested -for tax offences- and his background was looked into by the Probation Office. The uncle and the employer denied having provided him with either work or accommodation. In fact, the uncle went so far as to give 'a very bad report on his behaviour and character.' It was, wrote Silvertand, 'a good opportunity to get rid of a bad lot.'<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 5<sup>th</sup> March 1956.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 6<sup>th</sup> March 1956.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 5<sup>th</sup> March 1956.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., 26<sup>th</sup> March 1956.

Ramadhani Saidi, a 26 year old Zaramo from Kitunda in Kisarawe district, had been in town for two months when he was apprehended as a tax defaulter. He lived rent free in a house occupied by his cousin in Kinondoni, and tapped palm wine to earn a living, for which he got on average about Shs50/- per month. He had one previous conviction; an assault charge for which he received a six month sentence. On investigating his background, it was discovered that whilst he had been living with his cousin in Kinondoni, Saidi had no room there, using instead the passage of the house as his sleeping place. 'The general information obtained was not satisfactory', the Probation Officer concluded, 'and the Cousin is not prepared to take any responsibility. I think this man would benefit from being repatriated to his home.'<sup>110</sup>

As a sample of those people being removed from the town as 'undesirables' it is likely that the above individuals are representative. They are predominantly young and from Eastern Province, although Mikidandi Athumani was over forty, and Amiri Zauma was from Southern Province. In some cases there is evidence of previous (or current) criminal activity, though none could be described as hardened criminals. Others appeared to have fallen foul of colonial by-laws restricting freedom of movement –abroad at night without a light- or been arrested on suspicion for loitering (how justified this suspicion was is of course something we shall never know). Some of the repatriations seem particularly harsh. That of Mbegu Salehe especially so. Colonial officials, though, pressurised as they were by the rapid growth of the African urban population, were –to say the least- not inclined to benevolence, and here too the sample is no doubt representative.

The avenues of investigation pursued by the probation department are revealing. The first thing to establish apparently, was the length of residence in the capital. Cap.104 restricted legitimate urban residence only to those who could prove they had lived in the town for 18 months out of the last two years (from 1958 four out of the past five years). Whilst most of the people domiciled in town who could not fulfil this requirement were left untouched, this section greatly facilitated the removal of those designated as 'undesirables'. The next issue was the marital status of the accused. Each of the six repatriatees above was declared single in the court reports. It is not clear whether this referred only to their position in Dar es Salaam itself. Officials may well have viewed

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<sup>110</sup> Ibid., 27<sup>th</sup> March 1956.

married men—even those with rural wives- as more stable and responsible and hence a lesser risk. It is unlikely that individuals with families in the town would have been repatriated. A third factor in determining the fate of potential repatriatees was the presence of relatives in the capital. To have none at all meant that -without regular employment- you would be highly vulnerable to repatriation. In several of the court reports even the presence of a single relative was not enough to prevent removal. It did not help when relatives were not supportive, as in the case of Hamisi Asumani or Ramadhani Saidi. Why relatives might be inclined to disown the accused is unclear. It may have been a desire to avoid trouble themselves or reluctance to be seen to be associated with a malefactor. Alternatively, it could simply have been eagerness to relieve the burden on sparse domestic resources. The inference in some reports is that had the accused been found to have several relatives in the town -who it was assumed would take some responsibility for his behaviour- then he may be allowed to remain. A fourth factor to be investigated was evidence of a permanent address in Dar es Salaam. Failure to provide one would likely result in eviction from the town. Living with a relative may be enough to avoid this, but not necessarily. In the case of Ramadhani Saidi it appears that his having no room of his own, and sleeping in a passage, was one more factor pointing to removal. In determining repatriation it was also, of course, important for officials to ascertain the employment status of an individual. Lack of a job would almost certainly lead to expulsion. What is more, judging by our sample, even evidence of work was not necessarily enough to prevent removal. Three of the six repatriatees actually had waged employment at the time of prosecution, and another was self-employed. Only two appeared to be jobless, one of whom also claimed to have been employed at the time of his arrest, whilst the other had only just arrived in town. Finally, the criminal record of the accused was taken into account in any judgment over whether or not to repatriate an individual. Presumably, those with previous convictions were at a disadvantage in this regard.

By the late 1950s thousands of migrants were entering Dar es Salaam annually. Admittedly, some did perhaps come to the town unprepared for urban life. In addition, it is likely that a small proportion were attracted by the criminal opportunities that the great concentration of population offered. However, these groups probably represented a

minority of the urban immigrants. A great deal more were attracted by the opportunity to engage temporarily in waged labour; or by the opportunities the capital provided for income generation in the urban informal sector. For those able only to produce a subsistence from their rural *shamba* a periodic move to the town may have represented the most convenient way of earning the cash that the colonial administration was so assiduous in collecting as tax. Urban officials disregarded such calculations. As Dar es Salaam's African population burgeoned they were increasingly determined to restrict the entry of these rural-urban migrants. So, by the end of the colonial period the removal of 'undesirable' Africans was taking place on a massive scale. *Wahuni* raids were conducted daily. Involving mass roadside screening as well as house-to-house searches these raids represented an extraordinary degree of government intrusion. Amongst the African community they were no doubt deeply resented and provided a strong basis for mobilising support for TANU. Whilst colonial officials may have acknowledged that the repatriation campaigns were at times unfair, however, they were convinced about the correctness of their actions, perceived as being for the good of the town as a whole. In 1941, Justice McRoberts had warned of the neglect of African civil liberties. His judgment was brushed aside. Almost two decades later these same civil liberties were, if anything, being even more comprehensively ignored.



## Conclusion

### Dar es Salaam prior to independence

By the late 1950s a policy of stabilisation, involving the encouragement of more settled African urban communities whose numbers were restricted by the opportunities for formal employment, was being pursued in Tanganyika. It was most advanced in the territorial capital where rising wages -encouraged by the implementation of a statutory minimum wage- and increased provision for housing -both government and self built- appeared to be resulting in 'a move towards family living.'<sup>1</sup> In a 1959 re-survey, the African community of Magomeni -one of those areas covered by the original social survey of 1956- was, with almost equal numbers of men and women, found to have more of a balance between the sexes than three years earlier. 'This change', according to Leslie, 'which may be an index of 'urbanisation', or the adoption of a settled town life and an intention to remain there with one's wife and children, [was] reflected throughout the re-survey.'<sup>2</sup> However, the same factors that were resulting in greater urban rootedness were also contributing to an ever-growing flow of immigrants into the town, who, with the 'pruning of staffs' which had occurred in the wake of the introduction of a minimum wage,<sup>3</sup> were perhaps less welcome in Dar es Salaam than ever. And whilst increasing numbers of 'undesirables' were being repatriated to their 'homes' this was never enough to ease the position of officials responsible for administering the African areas. As immigration continued unabated, unemployment and all its concomitant problems grew - partly as a result of the 'better use being made from labour' resulting from the policy of stabilisation.<sup>4</sup> In 1957 (the year in which the minimum wage was introduced), according to the Eastern Province annual report, 'a rise in unemployment figures for Dar es Salaam and a resulting increase in the 'spiv' population engaged the

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<sup>1</sup> Leslie, *Survey*, p.290.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p.281.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p.123.

<sup>4</sup> R. H. Gower to Secretary of State for the Colonies, 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1959, in PRO/CO/955/83.

special attention of the Administration.<sup>5</sup> In spite of repatriating 'a larger number than usual of workless immigrants' to their 'homes',<sup>6</sup> however, the Provincial Commissioner still reported 'an increased disrespect for the forces of law and order and decreasing assistance from the public in maintaining it.'<sup>7</sup> 'The problem is not new', he complained,

but it has been intensifying over a considerable period. It arises from a mixed population inexperienced at urban living under modern conditions especially amongst the African community who find in Dar es Salaam a vacuum in place of the Native Authority of rural areas, from the weakening of religious and community discipline in the face of individual ambitions,<sup>8</sup> from the introduction of party politics and from the clearer organisation of employers and employees accompanying the spread of Trade Unionism.<sup>9</sup>

It was not just recent arrivals to the town who were causing the Administration a headache. The Provincial Commissioner and the Officer in Charge of the Dar es Salaam police identified a great number of the town's 'spiv' element as being 'persons who have been in the town for a longer period than eighteen months but who have either never been employed or who only take up from time to time temporary or part-time employment'.<sup>10</sup> According to the Chief Secretary to the Government

many of the spivs and hooligans are a useless type who sleep on shop verandas and other places and who have been in Dar es Salaam for a very much longer period than three years. It is more than probable that these are the worst type and have been living this life of indolence and petty crime for so long that the only cure is to send them back to their tribes where they will come under a certain amount of tribal influence and discipline.<sup>11</sup>

The long urban residency of these undesirables was evidence of the wrong kind of stabilisation. Such was the concern with which this phenomenon was held that a committee was set up in 1957: '[t]o consider and make recommendations in regard to the problems caused by the presence in Dar es Salaam of large numbers of persons of no fixed abode and no known means of support.'<sup>12</sup> In its initial report, the committee's Working Party drew up a list of 'factors affecting the problem' which, as a litany of

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<sup>5</sup> Eastern PAR for 1957, p.22.

<sup>6</sup> Eastern PAR for 1957, p.22.

<sup>7</sup> Eastern PAR for 1957, p.30.

<sup>8</sup> This is presumably the same individual ambition which the EARC were so keen to inculcate amongst Africans in both urban and rural areas in order that the market economy could penetrate East African societies swifter and deeper.

<sup>9</sup> Eastern PAR for 1957, p.30.

<sup>10</sup> CS to W.A.C. Mathieson, CO, 11<sup>th</sup> November 1957, in PRO/CO/822/1795. The significance of the 18 months period was that this was the length of time necessary to have resided in an urban area in order to qualify as a 'legitimate' town-dweller under the terms of the Townships (Removal of Undesirable Persons) Ordinance.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

colonial concerns, encapsulates perfectly official anxiety about the situation in Dar es Salaam. These factors included:

1. Loneliness and frustration; idleness and boredom, evidenced by the lessening of the importance of the tribal ties and the waning influence of local heads and leaders.
2. Thriftlessness leading to hunger and indebtedness.
3. Unemployment due to labour surplus...
4. Amoral and irreligious, although generally the influence of Islam is still the most powerful unifying influence.
5. Indiscipline in the home.
6. Lack of respect for law and order.
7. Difficulty found by the incoming rural African in adapting himself to town conditions and a strictly money economy...
8. Traditional and economic attraction to Dar es Salaam from the Southern and Eastern Provinces...
9. Facilities provided by relatives established with housing accommodation...
10. Bright lights and the aura of independent living.<sup>13</sup>

The Working Party put forward recommendations to address the situation. On receiving a copy of the committee's deliberations, however, Whitehall officials were dismissive. 'This is not a particularly impressive report', wrote W.H. Chinn, the advisor on Social Welfare, 'and its recommendations are entirely negative.' 'Experience in other territories', he continued,

proves that it is impossible to deal with the influx of people into the towns merely by using compulsory powers to remove them or to prevent them coming. I agree that there have to be regulations to ensure that large numbers of people do not enter the towns looking for work which is not there... but repressive measures of this kind cannot alone deal with problems which are deep rooted in the social conditions which produce them.<sup>14</sup>

B.E. Rolfe, another Whitehall official, concurred. 'This leaves a lot of questions unanswered', he wrote, 'and indeed quite a number unasked.' 'Is it too much to hope', Rolfe added, 'that we shall hear less about spivs, thugs and hooligans in future and more about human beings?'<sup>15</sup> If these criticisms filtered back to officials in Tanganyika, it was too late. In early 1958, the working party reported that many of their proposals had either been acted upon or were in the process of being taken up. These included the strengthening of powers of repatriation, the extension of the period of residence qualifying an individual to be a 'legitimate' town-dweller, the introduction of a system for voluntary registration, and the expansion of remand facilities to accommodate

<sup>13</sup> Confidential Memo, 17<sup>th</sup> February 1958, PRO/CO/822/1795 (numbering differs in orig.).

<sup>14</sup> Min., 8<sup>th</sup> April 1958, PRO/CO/822/1795.

<sup>15</sup> Min., 26<sup>th</sup> March 1958, PRO/CO/822/1795.

'undesirables' awaiting repatriation.<sup>16</sup>

As predicted by Chinn, however, these initiatives failed to achieve the desired effect. By the end of 1960, it was estimated that out of an adult male population of forty one thousand, between ten and fifteen thousand were un- or under-employed.<sup>17</sup> Now, with a newly appointed 'responsible' government and an African at the helm, Dar es Salaam's surplus population was beginning to be conceived of as more than simply an administrative or social problem. After just two months in office Chief Minister Nyerere voiced concern about 'the political dangers inherent in the number of unemployed in Dar es Salaam who were easily susceptible to the suggestion that the new Government was doing nothing for them.'<sup>18</sup> 'There was an urgent need', the Minutes continue, 'for an opportunity for the *genuinely* unemployed population to be able to get work.' (My emphasis). In the following January the Minister for Health and Labour was extolling the necessity of 'the formation of a public conscience which actively condemns town idleness.'<sup>19</sup> Like its colonial predecessor the new TANU-dominated Government was anxious to effect the civic education of the urban populace.

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<sup>16</sup> Confidential Memo, 17<sup>th</sup> February 1958, PRO/CO/822/1795.

<sup>17</sup> Memo. on unemployment in Dar es Salaam by the Minister for Health and Labour, Jan. 1961, in PRO/CO/ 822/2962.

<sup>18</sup> Extract from Minutes of a Meeting of the Council of Ministers, 4.11.60, in PRO/CO/822/2962. There is some irony in Nyerere singling out the town's surplus population as a political threat. Just three years earlier the Chief Secretary was complaining of the 'spivs and hooligans in the towns, particularly in Dar es Salaam and Tanga, from whose numbers undoubtedly come the majority of the thug element which so obviously supports TANU.' CS to W.A.C. Mathieson, CO, 11<sup>th</sup> November 1957, in PRO/CO822/1795.

<sup>19</sup> Memo. on unemployment in Dar es Salaam by the Minister for Health and Labour, Jan. 1961, in PRO/CO/822/2962.

**Appendix 1** *The population of Dar es Salaam, 1922-1967*

	Africans (Male)	Africans (Female)	Africans (Total)	Asians	Europeans	Total
1922			20,000 (approx.)			
1923			24,000 (approx.)			
1927			29,000	5,000	774	34,774
1928 <sup>1</sup>	12,791	9,139	22,734			
1931	15,299	7,417	22,716			
1937 <sup>2</sup>	11,550	12,000	23,550	8,800	970	33,320
1940	18,200	16,550	34,750	8,825	1,043	44,618
1946			Nearly 45,000			
1947			46,383	18,529	1,467	66,379
1948 <sup>3</sup>			51,231 <sup>4</sup>	16,270	1,726	69,227
1950			Nearer 75,000 than 50,000			
1952			77,330 <sup>5</sup>	22,547	3,603	103,480
1953			Nearer 90,000 than 70,000			
1957	53,847	39,516	93,363	29,986	4,479	127,828
1967						272,515

Source: DARs (except where stated)

<sup>1</sup> Dsm DAR reports (p.10) 'Census... of the Township was taken in a single day, and was an enumeration of all the people who had slept in town the previous night... Believed percentage of error very small.'

<sup>2</sup> Sources for 1937 and 1940 are Labour Dept. ARs in TNA/61/14/12.

<sup>3</sup> Source: 1948 Township census. The Asian total contains 908 Goans and 1,067 Arabs; the African total 77 'Coloureds' and 389 'Others'.

<sup>4</sup> The 1957 *African Census Report* (Dsm, 1963)) puts the African population at 50,765 in 1948.

<sup>5</sup> The 1957 *African Census Report* (Dsm, 1963)) puts the African population at 72,330 in 1952.

**Appendix 2 Tribal breakdown of Dar es Salaam survey sample by sex, religion and place of birth**

Tribe	Size of sample	Male	Female	Size of samples	Male	Female	Born in Dsm -	Female	Religion	- Male Muslim	Christian	- Female Muslim	Nil
Zarano	1,913	53%	47%	1006	38%	907	38%	40%	1%	99%	1%	99%	Nil
Rufiji	463	60	40	279	12	194	12	20		100		100	
Luguru	275	57	43	160	5	115	5	18	35	65	1	60	1
Ndengereko	230	59	41	136	30	94	30	43	1	99		100	
Ngindo	157	59	41	92	20	65	20	35		100		100	
Nyamwezi	156	60	40	93	10	63	10	19	26	72	2	81	5
Yao	138	53	47	73	32	65	32	25	8	92	6	94	
Mwera	111	65	35	71	17	40	17	35	13	87	7	93	
Matumbi	101	61	39	62	23	39	23	28	8	92	5	95	
Ngoni	88	60	40	53	23	35	23	23	32	68	38	62	
Pogoro	84	80	20	67	7	17	7	5	37	63	29	71	
Nyasa	82	57	43	47	28	35	28	29	36	64	31	69	
Manyema	73	40	60	29	12	44	12	78	7	93		100	
Makonde	69	64	36	44	14	25	14	28	18	82	28	68	4
Others	957	62	38	595	22	362	22	33	33	67	1	71	1
All Africans	4,897	57.5	42.5	2807	26	2100	26	35	14	86	10	90	1

Source: Appendices to Leslie's social survey

### Abbreviations in footnotes

AR	Annual Report
CS	Chief Secretary
CP	Commissioner of Police
DAR	District Annual Report (Dar es Salaam, unless otherwise stated)
DC	District Commissioner
DO	District Officer
Dsm	Dar es Salaam
DT	<i>Dar es Salaam Times</i>
ECB	Economic Control Board
EP	Eastern Province
MAAO	Municipal African Affairs Officer
MC	Municipal Council
MLG	Member for Local Government
MLO	Member for Law and Order
MOH	Medical Officer of Health
MS	Municipal Secretary
PAR	Provincial Annual Report (Eastern Province, unless otherwise stated)
PC	Provincial Commissioner
QPR	Quarterly Police Report
RM	Resident Magistrate
SN	<i>Sunday News</i>
SP	Police Superintendent
TA	Township Authority
TC	Town Clerk
TCSS	Tanganyika Council of Social Services
TH	<i>Tanganyika Herald</i>
TO	<i>Tanganyika Opinion</i>
TS	<i>Tanganyika Standard</i>
TT	<i>Tanganyika Times</i>
WN	<i>Weekly News</i>

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- No.11 John (J.A.K.) Leslie, Berkhamsted, 7<sup>th</sup> August & 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1998

### **Correspondence**

Joan Thompson (Married to a Tanganyikan Police Officer; living in Dar es Salaam in the 1940s/1950s), letter dated 1<sup>st</sup> March 1999

D.J.G. Fraser (Supt. Tanganyika Police Force 1952-1962), letter dated 7<sup>th</sup> March 1999

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